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GENERAL LORD ALLNBY  
BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER

*[Frontispiece]*

# EGYPT

## UNDER THE EGYPTIANS

By  
MURRAY HARRIS

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS



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# EGYPT UNDER THE EGYPTIANS

## I

### THE PROTECTORATE, ITS GENESIS AND ABOLITION

DURING his first interview with the Governor of Saint Helena, Napoleon said that Egypt was the most important country in the world. Two factors, which have since arisen, have immeasurably increased its importance; they are the Suez Canal and cotton. Too much stress cannot be laid on the strategic value of the former, as it is the sole line of communication between England and her Eastern Colonies and the latter has given Egypt an economic importance undreamt of even in the days prior to the discovery of the Cape route, when there was a considerable volume of transit trade, as the whole traffic between Europe and the East had to pass overland. Lancashire depends almost exclusively on Egypt for the finer grades of cotton and this has made of her soil by far the most valuable agricultural land in the world.

Napoleon's expedition to the Eastern Mediterranean was not mere idle filibustering, but was primarily designed to interfere with our communications, which he realized were vulnerable at this point. His views are given in a letter to the Directory, which contained

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these words—"pour détruire véritablement l'Angleterre, il faut nous emparer de l'Egypte." Supremacy in Egypt is still more essential for England to-day, but it is remarkable, that, as early as at the beginning of last century, statesmen of note of all nationalities, including Mohamed Ali himself, took it for granted that the paramount interest in Egypt was that of England and the most far-sighted of them saw that it was inevitable that England should play the leading rôle. Increasing recognition of this special interest at home led to deeper commitments in the country and was one of the contributory causes of the Occupation. The destinies of Egypt thus became indissolubly bound up with those of the British Empire, but latterly a gradual and general weakening of conviction concerning the mission of England in Egypt and of the all-importance of our supremacy there, coupled with graver preoccupations nearer home, have resulted in the relaxation of the bond.

In such circumstances, as much depends on the individual in these democratic days as in the most absolute oligarchies of the past. So we find that the destiny of Egypt has been shaped by three men of note. Other personalities have appeared from time to time in the limelight, but their passage has been ephemeral and their imprint on the affairs of the country evanescent. The salient personalities are, of course, Lord Cromer, the administrator, Lord Kitchener, the soldier, and Saad Pasha Zaglul, the nationalist. Egypt, as she is to-day, is the work of these three men.

We have it on the authority of Lord Edward Cecil, who was in daily official contact with Lord Kitchener for many years in Egypt and the Sudan, that his most cherished ambition was the foundation of the Viceroyalty of the Near East and North Africa. The *Hampshire* carried with her to the bottom of the North Sea all immediate possibility of the realization of this dream of Empire. Its official abandonment was voiced by Lord Curzon in the House of Lords when he said, "the opportunity of incorporating Egypt in the Empire was deliberately and, in his opinion, wisely rejected."

This opportunity, which for years had been sought by Lord Kitchener, came at the end of 1914, after the entry of the Turks into the War on the side of the Central Powers. It is quite certain that no opposition would have been forthcoming from our Allies. The last thread of vassaldom to the Porte was cut. But again that essentially British aversion to the "situation nette," so beloved of the French, led to a half measure. Lord Kitchener was engrossed with far more important affairs and probably looked on the proposed change in the status of Egypt as a stepping stone to annexation.

The Protectorate was declared on December 18th, 1914, and much of the subsequent trouble can be traced to the use of that very word. The Arabic is "humaya," and the same term is applied to denote the bond between the local Christian population and their authorities. The Moslems of the Near East have a deep-rooted contempt for the Levantine;

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it is shown in an even more marked fashion by the term applied to subject Christian races in Turkey—"raya" or cattle. Moslem Egypt felt then that there was something contemptuous in the word. An outright declaration of annexation as a Colony, with a promise of the autonomy they have now been granted, might have raised less resentment.

A Moslem lawyer of great influence in Cairo and a power among the Nationalists once expressed the opinion to me that a terrible "gachis" had been made and that we might have kept the British flag floating over Egypt and so retained this most important pawn in world affairs, by annexation in 1914 with a definite promise of representative autonomous government at the end of the War. He realized that this would have been the consummation of the wishes of every good Englishman and would have been prepared to respect our anxieties and admit the compelling argument of the Suez Canal, provided that a form of dominion government had been conferred on them. For years before the occupation, Egypt had invited the co-operation of foreign advisers and the system could have been retained.

It has been frequently advanced that a number of public pronouncements (given as sixty in a Nationalist tract) of Great Britain's intention to withdraw from Egypt, rendered a declaration of annexation on December 18th, 1914, impossible, and that the abolition of the Protectorate on February 22nd, 1922, was inevitable on the same ground.

But withdrawal was promised when the internal

state of the country permitted it and then only if the training and education of the political classes had attained a degree which would satisfy the world at large, that the country would continue to be properly administered and foreign interests not be jeopardized by withdrawal of British Control.

It can be argued with a considerable show of reason, that if ever circumstances alter cases, the suppression of the suzerain rights of Turkey over Egypt by her defeat on the field of battle at the hands of the British entitled Great Britain to assume the Turkish privilege. In fact it is difficult to refute the argument that Egypt was won by right of conquest from the Turks, especially with the example of the mandates conferred by the Treaty of Versailles on Great Britain over the territories of Mesopotamia and Palestine. Indeed our established position in the country gave us a more authentic warrant to supremacy in Egypt than right of conquest did in the case of Mesopotamia and Palestine, where the question of British supremacy was never mooted before the Picot-Sykes agreement of 1915.

Some still upheld the view, that the fortuitous circumstance of the defeat of the Turks did not release us from our pledges. In my opinion, the question of suzerainty was determined by the magnificent generalship of Allenby, whose defeat of the Turks was, both in conception and execution, perhaps the most brilliant feat of arms of the whole War, and that to fulfil our promises up to the letter under these new conditions, Dominion Home Rule should have

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been conferred on Egypt, when she had reached that stage of development, which would ensure the experiment being attended by no risk.

From a generous impulse, as some pretend, or out of weakness, as it seems to others, the retention of Egypt in the Commonwealth of Nations, which is called the British Empire, was not insisted on; the privileged position secured by Great Britain by the Protectorate was in turn abandoned and complete independence was granted her as an autonomous constitutional state, with the minimum safeguards for the protection of the foreign bondholder in the persons of Financial Adviser and the Debt Commissioners, a Judicial Adviser to guarantee the proper administration of Justice, a Director of European security, and a garrison to protect the lives and properties of Christian minorities and to secure the Suez Canal. Thus has England given all and gained nothing—not even the goodwill of the Egyptians.

There may still be some who are naïve enough to suppose that this “beau geste” was appreciated as such in Egypt. On the contrary not a spark of gratitude has been or ever will be evinced by Egyptians, who share to a man the opinion held by many at home, that every concession was wrung out of England by force and was attributable rather to the weakness of our policy than to the weakness of our cause.

The quite irreparable harm done by Turkey to the cause of the Allies and the world in general, though in particular to Great Britain, by prolonging

the war through her intervention at least two or three years, considered in conjunction with the hopeless maladministration of the country and the fearful record of massacre and persecution of the young Turks, more than justifies the occupation of all the non-Ottoman provinces, and would indeed, in other circumstances, have vindicated the seizure by Russia of such strategic points as Constantinople and the Dardanelles.

The loss of treasure and life, incurred by Great Britain, can never be made good. In the way of indemnity all we have to show is the Mandate over Palestine, which has an illusory sentimental value in cementing the friendship of the Jews the world over, which is already ours, and the Mandate over Mesopotamia, which in theory is one vast oil well, but in practice a well for the tax-payers' money. Egypt, on the contrary, would have been worth while and not one of our Allies would at that moment have disputed our claim to absolute sovereignty. The lien from the point of view of International Law was established, and if British control had been put on a permanent footing, it is impossible to gainsay that foreigners and natives alike would have benefited in the material sense. Regarded then from the point of view of abstract morality, material expediency or international legality the case for annexation appeared unassailable.

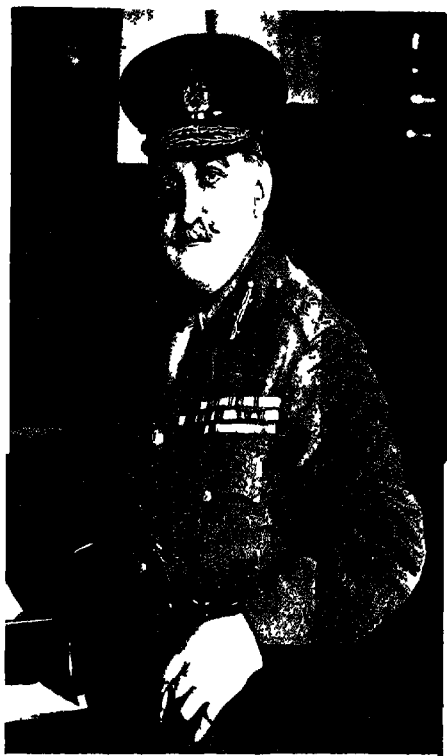
There was a considerable body of opinion among those responsible for our policy in Egypt in favour of the "situation nette." On the Egyptian side the



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four men whose views carried most weight were Sir Milne Cheetham, Acting Agent and Consul-General, General Sir John Maxwell, G.O.C. in Egypt, Lord Edward Cecil, Adviser to the Ministry of Finance, and Sir Ronald Graham, Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior. Lord Edward is known to have been an ardent advocate of annexation ; there can indeed be hardly two opinions, as to which was the better course. I like to think that the others shared his views ; but it should be remembered that at that moment our position in Egypt was based on bluff alone and that there was only a handful of Indian troops on the Canal to meet emergencies. Annexation too would have required a great number of additional officials, when every available man was wanted elsewhere, and a strong garrison would have been imperative. Against these arguments it can now be advanced that the country was never so tranquil as under Sir Milne Cheetham and General Sir John Maxwell, in spite of the far greater prevalence of motives of friction at that moment when England went to war with Mahomedan Turkey. The final and fateful decision was regarded probably by all as a compromise and by the partisans of annexation as an introduction to the more complete programme. Such was the prestige and popularity of both Sir Milne Cheetham and Sir John Maxwell among all classes of Egyptians and among the foreign diplomats that in the opinion of the writer they could have carried any measure associated with their names.

In the exercise of his powers, a G.O.C. can with



GENERAL SIR JOHN MAXWELL

*|To face page 3*



difficulty avoid creating ill-will among the civilian population ; but it should be noted that Sir John was an exception to this rule, and that when he left Egypt he was given a most stirring send-off in which Pashas, fellahin, and all the foreign colonies were represented. There have been few Englishmen so universally popular and respected in cosmopolitan Egypt.

In retrospect it seems evident that the hold these two gentlemen had on the country was under-estimated, and that the programme could have been put into operation at once, if it had been considered desirable. In view of the strategic and economic importance of Egypt any measure, which tends to consolidate our position there, is clearly advantageous. All these matters were doubtless weighed by the " Big Four " in Cairo, but the final decision rested of course with the Foreign Office, though they must have acted on the data supplied from Egypt.

The clumsiness of our handling of the Sisyphean stone in Egypt at every fresh emergency can be ascribed in great measure to the complete lack of knowledge of politicians and Foreign Office permanent officials at home as regards Egyptian affairs ; for guidance they had to rely on the man on the spot in Cairo. And it not infrequently happened that the local representative too was a newcomer, unversed in the ways of the Near East. Sometimes he was a soldier, at others a Colonial administrator, and all of them distinguished men in their own sphere. But they were dubious and indecisive in the bewildering maze of cosmopolitan intrigue and local complexities

with which they had to deal. Politicians at home considered them omniscient and they in their turn took for granted the same qualities in their advisers, who in a few cases were also new to the country.

With a view to supplying the politician with first hand information, which permanent officials at the Foreign Office could not be expected to have, as the work of the Residency comprised both the more familiar diplomacy and also local administration, which was outside their scope, an Egyptian department was recently created at the Foreign Office. Many mistakes might have been avoided if the Department had been in existence at the beginning of the War. It is still too early to comment on its efficacy, but the granting of independence to Egypt has not robbed it of as much of its function, as one might be tempted to suppose.

So then in December, 1914, the Cabinet had to take the fateful decision with regard to the future status of Egypt, partly on advice tendered from Cairo and, with the exception of Lord Kitchener, in the complete absence of any real guidance at home. The Government was apparently hypnotized by Cromer's unaccountable predilection, which he expressed in this way in his *Modern Egypt* :

"Egypt must either become autonomous, or it must be incorporated into the British Empire. Personally I am decidedly in favour of moving in the direction of the former of these alternatives."

He could not however foresee that the necessity would so soon arise of deciding one way or the other,

and he qualified his statement by predicting that the result of evacuation would be disastrous for many years to come and that one or more generations must elapse before the question could be even usefully discussed.

His aim was rather an experiment in internationalisation. The community of race, religion, language and habits of thought, which constitute with Europeans the main bonds of union between the rulers and the ruled, does not exist in the case of Egypt. Lord Cromer's dream was to fuse Moslems and Christians, Europeans, Asiatics and Africans into one self-governing body. He admitted it might take generations to achieve this object.

But it is almost unthinkable that this ideal could ever be attained. The Moslem has lorded it over his subject Christian races ever since the first wave of invasion swept over the land, shortly after the Hegira. He held undisputed sway for twelve hundred years. The instinct of self-preservation will never allow him to give the non-Moslem, who is in a minority of one to ten, an equal chance. The fact that the latter have all the aptitudes for westernization, very few of which are possessed by the Moslems, and that the whole machinery of modern civilization in Egypt, commerce, banking and the handling of the country's imports and exports, are in their hands, instead of militating in their favour, will only stiffen the opposition of the Moslem rulers.

The National Bank of Egypt affords a good illustration of relative values and capabilities. Its counters

are manned by the Jew, the Syrian and the Copt and the hundred and one denominations of the non-Moslem Levantine. They do all the clerical work and become in due course heads of departments. It should be remembered that this is an Egyptian Bank and that local influence and capital is paramount, though European interests are represented to some extent. It is gratifying to note that the management is exclusively British but the Board of Directors is drawn chiefly from the local financial element. The sole exception in favour of a Mahomedan in the higher posts is the presence of Adly Pasha Yeghen on the Board; his great fortune and political influence, coupled with the esteem in which he is held by natives and foreigners alike, makes of this a most wise appointment.

A prominent and intensely patriotic Egyptian decided to devote part of his wealth to securing a share of the lucrative cotton business for Moslem Egypt. The firm he created was managed by Egyptians and the clerks too were all local Moslems. I believe it still exists, but not one of the original staff remains—they have all been replaced by Levantines.

A similar lack of adaptability to Western methods is noticeable in Moslems the world over. In 1868 Baron Hirsch obtained a concession for building the Roumelian railways under a kilometric guarantee. The pirouetting of the train is apt to render one a bit giddy, for Baron Hirsch's engineers forestalled Einstein in discovering that a straight line was not

necessarily the shortest distance between two points. Every crook in the line added to its length and added to the guarantee. It was a profitable venture, as anyone familiar with the Hirsch "hotel" in the Faubourg St. Honoré can easily realize. The simple Turk saw no reason why the profits should go into foreign pockets and took over the railway, replacing the whole staff with his own people. Within two or three years even the Porte realized the necessity of invoking the aid of the foreigner again and the railway was handed back to Baron Hirsch once more. The Levantine was reinstalled and the Turk retained only as "ateshji" or "hamal" (fireman or porter); he could not even be relied on to count the tickets at the barrier. This still held good right up to the beginning of the War.

There was not a single Moslem employed by the Imperial Ottoman Bank in any clerical or executive capacity, and the same applies to the National Bank of Turkey. Nationalist pressure has now, I believe, resulted in the employment of a certain number.

It would be harsh and unmannerly to pass an adverse judgment on Mahomedans for this failing. They are not to be judged by our standards, as they do not realize the worth of them. They see no virtue in Western efficiency and inventiveness. Material progress does not, in their eyes, imply an inherent superiority. For centuries the Turk has been a peasant, a soldier, or an official, and has been content to watch the Levantine doing all the constructive work of the Ottoman Dominions, in which it was



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beneath his dignity to take a hand. The tradition has remained with Mahomedans throughout the Near East.

Some of our illustrated periodicals have recently popularized a form of picture which goes by the name of anaglyph. At first sight they appear all blurred and indistinct, but on being examined through coloured glasses they stand out sharply defined and even stereoscopic. So, too, no European, with the clear and logical vision of the West, can see the symmetry and cohesion of the Oriental's outlook on life, as viewed through his own coloured glasses.

But if it is unmannerly to judge by standards of our own, which the East does not recognize or admire, at any rate comparison is permissible. And these remarks are not made in a captious spirit but rather with a wish to elucidate by comparison the different methods pursued and results obtained by the early training and teaching of the various nationalities of the Near East. Time may modify the exaggerated value now accorded to material progress, in which the Mahomedan is so far behind the European, and it should not be forgotten that the light of moral progress, be it on the lines of Christ's teachings or of Mahomed's, originated in the East.

There is, however, no room for doubt that the lack of proper training and even of elementary education among the Mahomedans of Egypt, with the exception of a small handful who naturally prefer the higher administrative posts of the Government, which are theirs as of right, excludes the Moslem from many

posts. Modern competitive methods would ensure an equal chance and the average Mahomedan would be employed in clerical and executive capacities, if he could compete with the average non-Moslem Levantine.

The truth is that all the local Christian and Jewish communities, in fact all non-Moslem denominations, are well catered for in the matter of schools, which they owe to missionary enterprise and to the munificence of patriotic donors. The Greek, than whom no more sincere patriot exists, endows his community with magnificent institutions such as the Benachi and Salvago schools at Alexandria. The Jesuit moulds the minds of the Syrian and the local born Italian Levantine. The American missionary in Upper Egypt counts his pupils by the thousand, but chiefly among the Copts. But these communities only represent one million out of the fourteen million inhabitants of Egypt, though they provide probably ninety per cent. of the pupils educated in these schools.

Mahomedans have their "Kutabs," or elementary schools, many of which are attached to mosques, where the standard of teaching is considerably lower than that of Europe in the Middle Ages, and consists chiefly of repetition of the Koran and caligraphy; while a very few obtain accommodation in the properly conducted Government schools. A mere handful have the necessary family atmosphere, coupled with education in France or at home, which enables them to compete on even terms with

Europeans. These few have it all their own way in the higher Government posts or they gravitate to the liberal professions, where they frequently attain considerable distinction. Thus Ali Bey Ibrahim, the surgeon, Sirri Pasha, the engineer, Hassanein Bey, the explorer, the late Ali Bey Baghat, Curator of the Arabic Museum, to mention at random a few, who will readily be recognized by Anglo-Egyptians as being really on a level with Europe at its best.

But this type leaves industry and commerce severely alone, and the leaven is so minute that it has no effect on the loaf. What a handicap this is can be seen from the few efforts which have been made to found All-Egyptian institutions. The Egyptian University was started with a loud fanfare of trumpets, the very echo of which has now disappeared. Beyond an occasional lecture, it is hardly used. No degrees are or have been issued or recognised. Another example is the Banque Misr, or recently created Bank of Egypt. At the time of the agitation for independence, subscriptions were freely forthcoming, but I doubt whether all the European banks in Egypt have lost half a dozen accounts among their native clientele. The Egyptian of property prefers to trust his money to Banks managed by the hated, though reliable, Englishman. And the Banque Misr keeps its doors open, thanks to a number of current accounts opened by the few who were too weak to resist the pressure which was applied at the time. One of the regulations of the Banque Misr which betrays the mentality of its

founders, is the curiously illiberal clause which forbids the holding of its shares by any foreigner.

Where the Egyptian reigns supreme is in matters of agriculture ; so much so that the Syrian landowner himself not unfrequently employs a Mahomedan overseer to run his estates.

To draw a fanciful parallel, let us suppose an England with four millions of a race living in our midst who were better equipped to deal with the complexities of modern conditions. Suppose that the whole staff of all the banks, insurance companies and counting houses, with literally no exception, was drawn from this race. Not one in a thousand of the shops in the West End or the offices in the City, not a single shipping or railway line, no import or export house of any importance, was run by the native race. Suppose that the uneducated among us were either tillers of the soil, or hewers of wood and drawers of water for the foreigner in our midst, but that the educated filled all the ranks of Government officials and held political power. This supremacy would be the only balm for our racial pride and we should preserve by all possible means the power that happened to be in our hands, quite irrespective of our capabilities.

This is the exact position in Egypt to-day, and to my mind it is unthinkable that the Moslem will ever admit the Christian population of Egypt to anything approaching a real political equality. He would be submerged on the morrow of his doing so.

Lord Cromer can hardly have been so short-sighted

as not to realize that it will take generations and perhaps even hundreds of years to mould the immutable rigidity of Islam to the contours of the modern civilized mind.

His was doubtless the noblest aim, but man, with his restricted vision, must perforce keep his eyes on his own generation. The Cabinet took the middle course and time will show, I think, that we have fallen between two stools. Lord Kitchener the soldier and the man of action realized that Egypt with the Suez Canal was the main artery of our Empire and had he lived and had a voice in the shaping of our Egyptian policy, he would have seen to it that this artery was secure for all time.

So then the Protectorate which had existed in every essential but in name for 32 years became at the end of 1914 an undisputable fact. The acquiescence of France and Russia was obtained by the promise of Syria and Constantinople respectively and the *fait accompli* was recognized by the Powers one after the other, until finally the acknowledgment of the new state of affairs by the United States on April 22, 1919, made the list complete.

The strict application of Martial Law during the War rendered the engineering of any outbreak by the extremists impossible. But the slackening of military control after the cessation of hostilities coincided with the post-war spirit of unrest, which was experienced by all the world, including Egypt, and by a wave of prosperity, in which the indigent classes did not participate and which left them needier than ever.

A campaign of intimidation and violence was organized by the extremists, whose mouths were full of the catchwords invented by statesmen to gloss over the predatory instincts of the victorious Allies. Self-determination was the most fateful word coined. Yougoslavia, Transylvania and Western Asia Minor, not to mention Alsace Lorraine, were presumed to have determined themselves in favour of incorporation with their victorious neighbours. But this sop to the liberal minded sentimentalists was eagerly subscribed to by the leaders of the party of "Isteklal el Tam" (complete independence), who willingly blinded themselves to the patent fact, that in practice self-determination is not exclusively esoteric, but is sometimes imposed from outside.

A great fillip was given to the movement by the successful resistance of the Nationalists in Asia Minor under Mustafa Kemal to the decrees of the Allies. The complete discomfiture of the Panhellenists gave it a definite Islamic orientation. Nevertheless many causes, which will be examined later, led to the estrangement of the numerically small, though economically important, Christian minorities, on whose support of our cause everyone was counting. To turn to the events which immediately preceded and resulted directly in the abolition of the Protectorate, we find a most inexplicable anomaly.

Force of circumstances and the trend of public opinion work in curiously different ways under exactly similar conditions. Thus in 1882 owing to the general recognition of our paramount interest, Eng-

land was forced into accepting the sole responsibility of the occupation, which was rendered necessary by the insecurity of the lives and property of the European communities and Christian minorities, subsequent to the Alexandria massacres. Intervention in Bulgaria and the Balkans generally on behalf of the oppressed raya rendered the tremendous step of military occupation, however distasteful, at least compatible with Gladstone's Liberalism. During the riots preceding the bombardment of the forts by Admiral Seymour, only some 50 Europeans and Levantines were killed and this was the immediate cause of the occupation.

But from 1919 to 1921 the disturbances were immeasurably more serious and more general. It is remarkable that the British community suffered less than any other. The outbreak was again of an essentially fanatical anti-Christian character. Armenians were concentrated in separate camps. In Alexandria, the chief sufferers were the large Italian and Greek communities of the commercial and industrial districts of Attarine and Minet el Bassal. Two Italian officers from the *Helouan*, the Lloyd Triestino steamer which plies between Trieste and Alexandria, were killed. It was in the Mohamed Ali Square in the very centre of the town that the most disgraceful scenes took place. One unfortunate Greek was sprinkled with petrol and burnt alive, while a Scandinavian Judge of the Mixed Courts narrowly escaped with his life. The mob was in complete possession of the town for 24 hours and

besides molesting all and killing most of the Christians they met, they looted all the European shops which offered sufficient booty.

This occurred almost immediately after the Authorities had handed over to the Egyptian Police the responsibility for keeping order. It was known that some of the foreign communities had expressed their sympathy and had even been intriguing with the Nationalists. The destruction of the permanent way was attributed to foreign workmen. And rumour had it that even some of the foreign officials had not preserved a blameless neutrality.

But when they found their lives in danger and recognized all the time-worn symptoms of an anti-Christian outbreak, the revulsion of feeling was complete and Levantines and foreigners were unanimous in their support of the British cause.

At the end of the first 24 hours of the state of terror it was learnt that a number of Europeans had been killed by bullets, which could only have come from Egyptian Government rifles. Thereupon the foreign Consuls went in a body to the British Main Guard and demanded the intervention of our troops. It was rightly replied that responsibility for keeping order had been vested in the Egyptian Government and Police. As matters went from bad to worse and the mob was getting completely out of hand, the strange anomaly was seen of the Egyptian Government themselves, after this very short taste of the sweets of independence, recognizing their incompetence and applying for the intervention of our troops.



In four hours complete order prevailed again. It was thrilling to hear the hearty cheers with which the Tommies were everywhere greeted by all, including many who for months had been flirting with the Zaglulists.

These riots were incomparably more serious than those of 1882, which were more or less limited to Alexandria. The loss of life throughout Egypt must have been many times that of the former troubles and general damage to property very much greater. Yet we see the former being made an excuse for occupation and the latter followed by a series of cowardly murders of officials was apparently regarded as an expression of the popular will, which was worthy of respect and was without any possible doubt the immediate cause of our relinquishing our responsibilities and granting Egypt her independence.

How these two issues from similar circumstances can be reconciled is beyond the conception of the logically minded. Terrorism in Ireland was perhaps almost impossible to combat, but in Egypt we are not dealing with Europeans capable of organization and of any sacrifice for an ideal, however unholy. All familiar with Oriental mentality will realize that a firm attitude at the beginning of the troubles would have earned the respect and even gratitude of the majority of Egyptians and the loss of life would have been negligible.

The unchanging character of the Oriental renders Lord Milner's view as applicable to-day as in 1892. In his opinion "it would have been easier, so much

easier, if we had seen our way to adopt from the first, a more uniformly decided tone. Far from exciting opposition such an attitude would have quelled it." Again Lord Dufferin wrote "the masterful hand of a Resident would soon have bent everything to his will."

Roosevelt too, in a memorable speech, warned us of the dangers of half measures and excessive concessions. He said, "You have erred in the effort to do too much for the Egyptians and it is for you to make good your error. Weakness, timidity, sentimentality may cause more harm than violence and injustice. . . . If you do not wish to establish and keep order in Egypt, get out of Egypt."

The Nationalists had long been preparing their plans under cover and first emerged into the daylight on November 13th, 1918, when Saad Pasha Zaglul came at the head of a deputation to the Residency and demanded from England, in the person of the High Commissioner, Sir Reginald Wingate, the recognition of Egypt's claim to independence. On being informed that the latter was not acquainted with the views of H.M. Government, he applied for permission from the military authorities to proceed to England at the head of a delegation representing the people of Egypt, in order to lay their case before the authorities at home. Sir Reginald is reputed to have counselled acquiescence—most undoubtedly the right course—but other views prevailed and the request was refused. A little *fêting* would have smoothed their ruffled feathers and a first hand view

of Allied unity in the first flush of victory would have destroyed any lingering illusion of foreign support.

The legal element, which plays in Egypt as elsewhere, an extremely important rôle in politics, was already predisposed in favour of the Party of Independence, and threw in their lot definitely with them, when it was learnt that the Adviser to the Ministry of Justice had been preparing a note on Constitutional reform and was also suspected of the authorship of a scheme for introducing British Jurisprudence and the exclusive use of English into the Law Courts. Sir William Brunyate, the official in question, was certainly the most unpopular Englishman in the service, and it is almost equally certain that he was the most efficient. It is only men of this decision of character who can deal with the illogical clamourings which have always to be met in the East.

A story which is universally current among the Egyptians, but which in view of Sir William's lack of knowledge of colloquial French can have no foundation in fact, serves well nevertheless to show how the gullible people of Egypt imagined they were domineered by Brunyate. It was much used for propaganda. When Rushdi Pasha objected that the introduction of the proposed reforms would set the country aflame, the Adviser is reputed to have said "*je l'éteindrai avec un crachat.*"

The support of the Bar, including nearly all the members of the Mixed Court Branch, put the seal on the national character of the demand for independence

and left no doubt that the movement was no longer the propaganda of a few disappointed politicians.

With the departure of Sir William Brunyate to Hongkong, where he fills and adorns the chair of the Vice-Chancellor of the University, disappeared the last British Official in Egypt who really knew his mind. The straightforward bluntness of his character antagonized certain sections ; his admirable singleness of purpose made him appear somewhat ruthless and domineering ; but the tales which still go the round about his rudeness are devoid of all fact and are to be attributed solely to pique and propaganda. If England had had a very few more men of his fibre in the ranks of the Egyptian Civil Service, she would not have suffered the loss of her prestige which would appear now to be almost irretrievable.

Sir Reginald Wingate had come from the Sudan, where he had a homogeneous population of natives to govern. He and his staff were now faced with the intricacies of cosmopolitan Egypt. He was succeeded by Lord Allenby, also a soldier, without diplomatic training and without experience of the Near East. Both had to rely to a great extent on outside advice in many of their difficulties.

We now come to the period of hesitancy and conflicting counsels which did more than anything else to undermine our position. The broth was brewed by the Residency and most of the Generals in Egypt were invited to stir it now and again. A number of fresh ingredients were counselled from London. And the lack of a definite policy and indecision over

every new one adopted was pitiable in the extreme. Each concession was regarded, as always in the East, as a further sign of weakness. Notorious political agitators were interned for creating disorders and released again after a few days. Measures, rendered necessary by local conditions, were continuously being countermanded from London. And all the time Egypt, accustomed to immediate obedience of the peremptory, if illogical, commands of the Mameluke and of the Pasha, was being incited into open revolt by our vacillations.

The first period of unrest was followed by comparative tranquillity after the release of Zaglul Pasha from Malta. When he returned to Egypt, literally the whole country turned out to do him honour, and few men in history have had such a reception from their fellows. But he showed himself again incapable of keeping within the bounds of constitutionalism and a further period of exile followed.

The next phase changed the whole complexion of Egypt. It was that of the political murders, which did more than anything to embitter feelings on both sides and robbed Egypt of all her sympathizers. Prior to this, there were numbers of officials and residents who loved the country and had much sympathy with its inhabitants. Their tone has now completely changed and with the memory of the complete lack of condemnation and with the suspicion of popular approval of these cowardly murders, it is difficult to write dispassionately on the subject of the Egyptians.

The heady political hashish, which the youth of Egypt are given to-day, and their dervish-like repetition of "Masr lil Masryin" (Egypt for the Egyptians) and "Masr lil Muslimin" (Egypt for the Moslems), had brought the youth of the country to that bemused state of mind which culminates in political crime.

This indeed can only explain the attempt on the life of Zaglul Pasha, the High Priest of "Isteklal el Tam" (complete independence) by a student who avers he did it to prevent the opening of negotiations on the question of the Sudan. What a marked contrast between the immediate arrest and incarceration of this deluded young man and the severe mauling he suffered at the hands of the mob and the complete immunity with which the Society of Revenge, whose avowed object was to avenge the exile of Zaglul Pasha, shot seventeen British Officials in broad daylight and often in crowded streets, without any molestation whatever. The frequency of these aggressions and the immunity of the perpetrators gave rise to considerable comment on the Departments concerned.

The full story of the breaking up of that band has not been told at home, though it all came out before the British Court Martial in Cairo. Its circumstances are so strange and romantic that they are well worth repeating.

Such is the impenetrability of the East and so unbridgeable the gulfs of race and religion that probably the whole Mohamedan population of Cairo, if not actually aware, could easily have learnt all

there was to be known. And without doubt each fresh murder was widely applauded in the bazaars. Yet rewards of £5,000 remained unclaimed, for it was generally recognized that the Moslems of Cairo might be deaf to the reports of revolvers in their midst, but would hear to a man the faintest whisper of the traitor in the ear of a British Officer.

People were beginning to despair of the authorities, who dared not take action against the known ring-leaders, some of whom are at liberty to-day, when eighteen months after the beginning of the murders the first light was thrown on the composition of the Black Hand.

The Oriental Secretary of the Residency, Major Gayer Anderson Bey, a lover and a very knowledgeable student of the Orient, lived in the middle of the native quarter, in a house which was built by the German architect, Herz Pasha, by command of Lord Kitchener, with a view to beautifying the surroundings of the Hassan Mosque at the foot of the Citadel. Every morning he used to ride on his bicycle right through the narrow streets of Zeida Zeinab to the Residency, and one day he was setting out as usual when his boy, a Fayoumi, told him not to go. No amount of pressure could extract any further information, so immediately he took another route, told the authorities and left by the next train for Alexandria.

A number of plain clothes men were sent out to follow the road usually taken by Major Anderson and

they succeeded in arresting nine armed men who were lying in wait for him.

A day or two later, one of these turned King's evidence and started by saying that Anderson's servant had been decoyed by a promise of a "leila," which being translated means wine, women and song, into a cave at the back of the Citadel in the Mokattam Hills and that his body would be found there. This turned out to be the case.

On several occasions Anderson Bey had been disturbed by visits from young fellows, who had come to his house on one pretext and another and shuffled off again. They had obviously been sent there with a sinister purpose but their courage failed them. Also he had found it strange that his servant should be on such good terms with some young students living in the next house to his. He would frequently boast to his master that he had been to the cinema with one of them or on a "fuzha" (picnic) to the Zoological Gardens at Shem el Nessim, a day devoted to the rapturous inhalings of the first spring airs.

The most fantastic side of the story is that it transpired during the proceedings that his would-be murderers were living in the next house to him and that this was the headquarters of the murder gang.

The attitude of the Nationalists had become so intransigent that they refused to listen to or discuss any proposals before national independence was recognized. When the Milner Mission arrived, therefore, the plans for a complete boycott were ready and



were immediately put into effect. The methods of the pickets, employed in strikes to prevent black-legging, were applied to every individual member of the Mission and open consultation with any Egyptian, whatever his station in life, became almost impossible. Conversations took place under the seal of secrecy, but no real contact was established, except with the foreign community and the leaders of business, who are invariably of that category. As far as Egyptian opinion is concerned then, the result of this Mission was purely negative, in that they could but conclude from the national attitude that Egypt had much to conceal and that contact was deliberately rendered impossible because they had no constructive proposals to put forward, but only a general negation of Great Britain's established right to her interest in the country. It is suspected too that the Nationalist leaders were not quite so convinced of the unanimity of the various minorities, and even of the fellah, as they liked to appear and the questioning of individuals in privacy might have elicited regrets at the proposed elimination of British influence. Such were not voiced, it is true, but then no opportunity was given for the expression of individual opinion, and in this attitude the Nationalists showed their distrust of that national unity of which they had made so much. The muzzling of the right of free speech has become even more marked since their accession to power; in spite of this the Constitutional Liberals, headed by Adly Pasha, have made considerable inroads on the

Government majority, though this is not allowed to appear. Every change of Government in such circumstances must be in the nature of a coup d'état, and a front of national unity is only preserved by similar, though less drastic, methods to those employed in Soviet Russia. And just as the Milner Mission found it impossible to obtain a free expression of public opinion, so too it can be safely predicted that free speech will be stifled and that there will be no change of Government in Egypt, whatever the state of popular conviction, until it can be brought about by force, or by stress of extraordinary circumstance.

The only tangible result of this Mission was to crystallize out the demands of the Nationalists, who showed how groundless was the hope of bargaining, as every proposal was met with the demand for complete independence. Even their generous offers have now been superseded by far more liberal concessions and the Milner Mission has therefore had little or no effect on the destinies of Egypt.

Terrorism in Ireland had served as a model for the Egyptian extremist and indeed served his purpose too. The Home Government was still warmly congratulating itself for having settled (as some still imagine) the age-old Irish question. The impossibility of dissenting with the Party of Independence without incurring grave personal risk on the part of the Copts and religious fanaticism, which had been carefully fanned to fever heat, among the Moslems, gave an appearance of complete solidarity to all native Egyptians. A hastily drawn parallel between

the two cases and an earnest desire to solve at least one of the innumerable problems of the day led to the policy of surrender.

The Protectorate was abolished on February 28th, 1922. Fuad's title was changed from Sultan to "Malek el Masr" (King of Egypt) and Egypt entered on a phase of autonomous existence which she has not enjoyed since the days of the Ptolemies, or rather, as the Greek element predominated in the heyday of Alexandrine civilization, since the priestly and kingly power of the Pharaohs was overthrown by the Persians under Cyrus and Darius.

## II

### THE SUEZ CANAL

At the Mediterranean entrance to the Suez Canal there is a striking bronze statue of de Lesseps, with outflung right arm pointing the way to the south. Modern habiliments, which do not lend themselves to statuary, somewhat mar its heroic pose. But the inscription at its base worthily commemorates his work. It reads: *Aperire terram gentibus*—to open the earth for the nations.

The basis of our policy in Egypt is to keep it open, and this can only be ensured from the Western bank. The War has shown how impregnable it is, when defended by European troops in occupation of Egypt.

Immediately after their entry into the War on the side of the Central Powers, the Turks, prompted by Liman von Sanders, started their preparations for attacking the Canal. The main defence was the 180 miles of barren desert to be crossed. It is reputed that the measures taken on our side aroused the caustic comment of Lord Kitchener, who asked General Sir John Maxwell whether our troops were there to defend the Canal or the Canal to defend them. But events fully justified the G.O.C. in Egypt, who realized all along that it would be sheer waste of money to raise an elaborate system of defences.

The endurance for which the Turks have always been noted was again remarkably shown in this futile expedition. As usual, they came to grief over transport, which was mostly effected by man power. Water had to be carried over one hundred and fifty miles of desert. The pontoons destined for the passage of the troops had a dozen rings on either gunwhale, through which a bar was passed to enable them to be carried by some twenty or thirty men at a time.

It was proved that the presence of a monitor and a gunboat or two was ample to protect the salt lakes opposite Ismailia. And this point, where the Turks expected perhaps to meet the least opposition, was speedily abandoned for direct assaults on the Canal banks. It is considerably to their credit that they actually got down to the water's edge and launched the pontoons. A mere handful only got across alive and two of these pontoons, presented to the Zoological Gardens of Cairo, bear eloquent testimony to the bravery of the desert-worn troops who attempted the crossing. They were torn to shreds by the close range fire.

The Turkish communiqué of the date makes delightful reading. It goes, "by the grace of God and His Prophet Mahomed we have crossed the Canal. Our losses were four martyrs."

The lesson learnt from this attack will apply for all time. It is that whoever is in control on the Egyptian side has complete mastery over the destiny of the Canal. For a hundred miles on the

East there is no cover and no water in any quantity in any season. On the West, cover, if not actually existing, is coming into being. The Canal authorities are gradually planting a belt of trees all along to the depth of the two hundred metres granted them in the original concession. It is strange to see flourishing thickets of conifers, which are usually associated with more northern climes.

The proposal of keeping a garrison of British troops on the far side of the Canal is so transparently unpractical that it is bewildering to find it seriously discussed at home. On the grounds of humanity alone, it should be ruled out. Kantara is still a fresh memory for many who were quartered there during the War. Unbroken desert as far as the eye can see to the East, a narrow strip of water in the immediate foreground, and tantalizing green, in itself sparse enough, to the West. It would be inhuman to quarter troops in this bare desert, so inhospitable that it is never even visited by the Bedouin.

The pipe line laid at great expense across the desert to El Arish during the War has been dismantled. It could presumably be rebuilt, but would be at the mercy of any paid Bedouin with a four inch stick of dynamite. If Egyptians were to make up their mind at any time to oppose a crossing, it would be problematic whether it could be effected.

It is also difficult to ensure the defence of the Canal by troops quartered on the Western bank. Water again enters into this, as into all Egyptian problems.

The whole Canal Zone is dependent for its fresh water supply on the Ismailia Canal, which leaves the Nile at Cairo, runs a little north towards Zagazig, and from there due East to Ismailia, where it branches north and south and follows the Canal to Port Said and Suez respectively. At any time of friction therefore with the Egyptian Government, or in cases where our troops would be required for the protection of Europeans against those fanatical outbreaks which have been a constant feature of Egyptian history, the whole zone would be at the mercy of the man who held the water gate. The installation of distilling plants, as at Aden, might solve this difficulty but would cost a great deal of money.

The very real need for the protection of the non-Moslem minorities of Egypt is dealt with elsewhere. Whatever foreign governments think about the question, their colonies were unanimous during the riots of 1919-21 in invoking officially the protection of our troops. It has been shown that such protection against fanatical outbreaks can only be rendered by garrisons on the spot in Cairo and the principal towns.

For these reasons it is essential that England should keep her military control of Egypt and that our troops should be stationed, as at present, in Cairo or elsewhere in the Delta. Any compromise on this point is tantamount to jeopardizing the security of the Canal and Imperial communications with the East.

*The Involved National Status of the Canal.*

Lord Palmerston's steadfast opposition to the Canal project was based on his fear that the French interest would predominate to the detriment of our own. But he could not prevent its realization, as public opinion made an open breach with the French impossible, so soon after the Crimea. He foresaw the possibility of endless complications: fortunately, however, the Gordian knot was cut by the occupation in 1882.

A great Frenchman, Monsieur Renan, referred to the international jealousies inseparable from the project in these terms: "A single Bosphorus has hitherto sufficed for the troubles of the world. You (meaning de Lesseps) have created a second much more important one."

The official opening of the Canal was made the occasion of great celebrations, and the Oriental lavishness of Ismail's hospitality to the Empress Eugénie, who was present, instead of setting the seal to French hegemony in Egypt, as hoped by de Lesseps, provided a further subject of complaint to the foreign bondholders, the accumulation of which contributed more than any other cause to the occupation. Among other extravagances, a broad road, raised some twelve feet above the flood level, was built five miles across the cultivation to the Pyramids and a palace constructed at the foot of them for her reception: Verdi was commissioned to compose "Aida" for the occasion, and a million and a half was spent in these trivialities.



These are instances of the wholesale waste of public funds which characterized Ismail's rule and led to bankruptcy and his deposition and finally to the Occupation.

De Lesseps often spoke of the Canal as his own property and the Occupation must have been a bitter blow to his hopes. But it still retains much of the character impressed on it by the nationality of its great originator.

Funds were provided mostly by Egypt, and labour exclusively. This noble work, which has been of such inestimable benefit to humanity, was the swan song of the *corvée* system. In those days dredging and trench cutting machinery had not reached anything approaching its present standard of efficiency and without forced labour the world would have had to wait half a century or more for the Canal.

Its geographical position gives Egypt an undisputable title. But political control, vis-à-vis the world at large, passed into the hands of the British with the Occupation, and shortly after Lord Beaconsfield's bold stroke ensured financial control also. According to the story, against his proposal to buy out Ismail and obtain a majority of the shares, his opponents urged that the money could not be found. £4,000,000 was the sum needed. He met this objection by going to the Rothschilds and supplying proof of the Bank's support the next morning.

Forty years of British occupation still leaves the executive control of the Canal in French hands—a great tribute to British standards of fair play. From

the Comte de Serionne right down through this immense administration the heads of all departments are almost invariably Frenchmen. At frequent intervals along the Western Bank are to be found pleasant little colonies of French officials, and Ismailia too is Gallic in character.

Some inconveniences can be expected from this régime, but they have been rarer than one would naturally suppose. In fact real friction has been nearly always avoided, though the recent decision of the Canal Authorities to remove the military railway bridge between the West Bank and Kantara led to much acrimonious feeling.

This bridge was constructed during the War and for four years facilitated traffic between Egypt and Palestine. No serious delay was ever caused to shipping in the Canal by its operations. It was therefore somewhat surprising to find the French authorities agitating for its removal on the grounds of possible interference with Canal traffic. Formerly it was a great convenience to enter the train at Cairo station and wake up next morning at Jerusalem. Goods traffic also went straight through. Among the British railway and military authorities there was considerable opposition to the proposed demolition of the bridge. But the French Canal officials insisted and succeeded in inspiring fears as to possible interference with shipping into the Directors of some of our own big lines. Backed by these and by the British members of the technical committee they gained their way.

The mere fact that there was considerable opposition to the proposal of removing the bridge among people qualified to give an opinion, who argued that four years of heavy traffic, including ammunition and guns, had proved its reliability, should have made the authorities more circumspect in complying with the Canal Officers' demands. The swing bridge over the Dee below Chester at Hawarden has functioned with the utmost regularity for the last thirty years or so.

The rumour got about that the real reason for the French authorities' objections was to be looked for in the disappearance of the French sea traffic between Syria and Egypt, which was at one time considerable but dwindled to nothing owing to the greater facilities of the land route, while the bridge was in operation. No credence can be attached to this. It was rather excessive caution which led to the scrapping of this costly work.

Whatever the real reason, it is a matter for regret that the strategic importance of the bridge did not outweigh all other considerations. A large sum of money spent on repairs and improvements would have made it so safe as to overrule all objections and would have obviated the sacrifice of this important pawn in Near Eastern affairs.

Canal directorships are in reality political appointments, not to say diplomatic. Sir Ian Malcolm, for some time Private Secretary to Lord Balfour, has recently been given a seat on the Board. Its importance renders it one of the most desirable Director-

ships to be obtained and its emoluments are also considerable—£2,000 a year and free passes on most railway and shipping lines.

*The Influence of the Canal on the  
Destinies of Egypt.*

The discovery of the Cape route some four hundred years ago diverted the commerce of Europe with the East from its natural channels through Egypt and the valley of the Euphrates. From time to time the old route was revived, but the toll exacted for the passage of goods by the predatory Pashas of Egypt and the obstructions of the Turks to free navigation in the Red Sea, on the grounds of its being the holy sea of Mecca, made its natural advantages over the longer route at best precarious.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the Levant Company were prosecuting a fairly regular trade with the East via Aleppo and the valley of the Euphrates.

Various attempts were made to open up the overland route between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, but it was not until 1845 that the Indian mail started to use it regularly. All heavier traffic continued to use the Cape route until the opening of the Canal.

It was this waterway therefore which revived the transit trade which existed between Europe and the Far East and had fallen into abeyance for three hundred years. Suez and particularly Port Said are

important depôt ports, goods from the East being landed here for distribution in the Eastern Mediterranean. Both these flourishing towns, which may be reckoned as third and fourth in importance in Egypt after Cairo and Alexandria, have as their sole *raison d'être* the handling of this traffic. Other industry or commerce there is none.

Politically and economically, the Canal may be said to have put Egypt on the map again. But it is doubtful whether its benefits counterbalance its disadvantages. The Suez Canal is the key of the East and rivalry for its possession must always exist. It is far too important to be entrusted to the whim of Orientals and indeed it is noteworthy that England and France both launched on their policy of intervention in Egypt simultaneously after the opening of the Canal.

Partly force of circumstances and partly greater foresight and diplomatic skill have given us the control and England's predominant position in world affairs at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries can in a large measure be ascribed to the possession of this key to the East.

Rights rather than duties seem to be the main preoccupation of our present day legislators. Their theorizing too is generally devoted to the rights of others to the detriment of our own. Thus we see one of our main safeguards—military and political control of Egypt—sacrificed to a passing phase of self-determination. But as the Suez Canal can very truly

be described as the main artery of the Empire, no theoretical rights should take precedence over that of self-preservation, and it is the first duty of the Government to secure this all-important line of communication.

### III

## PAST AND PRESENT METHODS OF GOVERNMENT

THERE are certain anomalies in the present status of Egypt which appear on the surface incomprehensible to the student of Egyptian affairs. Chief of these is the presence of a British High Commissioner and British troops in an independent country.

But the valley of the Nile has always been the home of paradox and there are many precedents for this duality of control in Egyptian history.

The proximity of this land of opportunity attracted from the early days of Mohamed Ali all the adventurers of the Mediterranean and the signal and easy successes of many of them led to the formation of a colony of foreigners whose superior energy and enterprise made them a power in the land. Thus was gradually built up an imperium in imperio and the interests controlled by this group of pioneers grew to be so important a factor in European finance that they could no longer be left to the whims of an Oriental potentate.

Ismail's personal extravagance was spoon-fed by the great issuing houses of London and Paris, to whom Egypt was mortgaged. When the coupons were not met, fresh loans at exorbitant rates were

floated. The country became so insolvent and its affairs so involved that in 1879, Great Britain and France, as the two most interested Powers, took it on themselves to depose Ismail, with the concurrence of the Porte, and Monsieur de Blignières and Major Baring (subsequently Lord Cromer) were appointed Controllers. The regeneration of Egypt dates from their appointment. The Dual Control failed however owing to the lack of force and material support behind it, and it was not until the revolution of Arabi made armed intervention imperative that European reformers were able not only to draft schemes for the administrative regeneration of Egypt, but also to carry them into effect.

In the days of the Pharaohs the children of the exile took a prominent part in the internal administration of the country. Joseph was the first great example of Jewish foresight and ability in matters of finance, and was in fact the first Financial Adviser. In Ptolemaic times the Greek played a predominant rôle. And later, in the great days of the Ottoman Empire, the Turk filled all the important posts. Mohamed Ali, it is true, won a quasi-independence for the country, but the real rulers were still Turks, though camouflaged as Egyptians. Throughout history, therefore, is seen this duality of control, which would seem peculiar to Egypt, but the intervention of Europe proper only dates from 1879.

To turn to recent times, the Anglo-French Dual Control, which in practice was merely of an advisory nature, gave way to military occupation and effective



British Control, but open recognition only came with the Declaration of the Protectorate in December, 1914.

February 28th, 1922, in theory put a term to British supremacy with the abolition of the Protectorate. But the state of unrest in the country made the removal of our troops impossible. Egyptians themselves realize the necessity of retaining many British specialists in the administration, but these are now subordinate to the Egyptian Minister and serve on contract only. The Adviser to the Ministry of Finance, an office occupied at present by Mr. Patterson, still enjoys some of the prestige and power which formerly attached to the post.

The latest phase then of British influence in Egypt amounts to military occupation without real civil executive authority. The relations between the British administrators and their Egyptian colleagues have always defied definition. But the period of practically undisputed, though theoretically disputable, authority has now given way to open recognition of Egypt's right to manage or mismanage her own affairs.

In considering the machinery and framework of the Egyptian Government, allowances must always be made for these apparent discrepancies and anomalies. To start with no better description can be given of the system hitherto in vogue than that so often applied by Nubar Pasha—"Ce n'est pas un gouvernement, c'est une administration," this latter word being obviously used in the sense of a Board of Directors.

Up to December, 1914, the Khedive was nominally the Head of the Government, but as he was technically a vassal to the Porte, any important measure which he wished to introduce was usually the subject of protracted bargaining. His Ministers had a semblance of executive authority, but in practice conformed to the suggestions or veiled instructions of the European Advisers attached to the Ministries. It was laid down early by Lord Cromer that open conflict of opinion entailed loss of portfolio for the Minister. While on the subject of Ministries, it should be remembered that the Ministry of Wakfs or Pious Foundations is the only one which has always been under the control of an indigenous and responsible Minister. Its internal workings being subject to Koranic Law, no foreign control was considered just or advisable. One small exception to this rule was made in the appointment of a British engineer to advise on technical matters. In practice it has been found that with the exception of this technical department, the Ministry of Wakfs has had a deplorable record of bungling and corruption.

*Recent Experiments in Representative Government.*

The Organic Statute of 1913 provided for the popular election of a Legislative Council and was in reality the first trial of representative institutions for the Government of Egypt. Mohamed Said Pasha was returned and Saad Zaglul became Leader of the opposition. Futile discussions on Standing Orders and interminable bickerings on non-essentials became

the order of the day. Mohamed Said fell and was succeeded by Rushdi Pasha, who remained Prime Minister throughout the War. British civil and military authorities owe a considerable debt to him for his loyal co-operation during this difficult and critical period.

Ten years earlier Lord Cromer had written that he was "very strongly of the opinion that any attempt to confer full parliamentary powers on the Council would, for a long time to come, be the extreme of folly." It is difficult to understand how he reconciled this conviction with his Liberal predilection in favour of autonomy as the ultimate solution of the Egyptian problem.

The results of the first session fully justified his apprehension and with the outbreak of the War it was considered inadvisable to continue the experiment for the time being. Proclamations under Martial Law took the place of Legislative sanction. The next session was held clandestinely after the Armistice at the house of Saad Zaglul, when five-sixths of the members were present. The most important resolution passed was to the effect that all laws and decrees promulgated under Martial Law were null and void. This included the Protectorate and the deposition of Abbas Hilmi. An Act of Indemnity to regularize all such measures was made a *sine qua non* of the abolition of the Protectorate.

The machinery designed under the Organic Statute of 1913 exists to-day with certain most radical modifications; the electoral laws have been changed, the

status of European Advisers and Controllers and other officials, among whom the British have always been in the majority, has become subordinate. King Fuad's position has also been qualified ; from being a vassal of the Porte he has become an independent constitutional monarch.

The first elections after the abolition of the Protectorate resulted in an overwhelming majority for Saad Pasha Zaglul. The inaugural sessions were, in spite of a 95 per cent. majority for the government, attended by all the old disorder. A popular and witty Prince of the reigning family professed to have been much amused at the sight of the dignified President of the Chamber, Ahmed Mazloum Pasha, ringing his bell for order for hours on end for all the world like an auctioneer. Until this preliminary enthusiasm has waned and the "cacoethes loquendi" of the half-baked Egyptian legislator has run its course, it is doubtful whether much useful business can be transacted in the Chamber.

#### *Exterritorial Privileges of Foreigners.*

The present Government still labours under the onus of the Capitulations and Foreign Powers jealously guard every right ceded to them by the Porte since 1650. Exterritoriality of jurisdiction and exemption from taxation are the two privileges most constantly asserted. To the best of my knowledge, only one concession has ever been made by the Powers on these two points, and that under Martial Law. The

Egyptian Government applied some three years ago to the British Authorities for permission to levy a small house tax on British subjects, as a contribution towards the cost of the Ghaffirs (night watchmen). The Ghaffir tax amounts to a pound or so for every hundred pounds of rent, and under Martial Law British subjects were instructed to pay this tax, but the legal element vehemently protested against this violation of rights granted to the foreign communities many hundreds of years ago; and it is doubtful whether it has ever been paid by any foreigner in Egypt except the British. Certain members of the Mixed Courts refused to pay this tax, and the Government had to give way, as they would have been the members of the Court of last instance, if litigation had arisen on the point.

With this exception and that of the land tax the foreigner enjoys complete immunity from taxation. In a post-war world, it is exceptional to find a country where one can live without Income or Corporation Tax, rates, or any of the thousand and one vexations invented by revenue authorities to fill their depleted coffers. Even customs dues cannot be altered except by unanimous consent of all the Powers interested.

On many occasions, particularly in the insolvent days of Ismail, the Egyptian Government discussed the possibility of applying European forms of taxation, such as Income Tax, to the natives of Egypt. Very rightly it was held to be inequitable to impose, on the indigenous inhabitants of the country, taxation, from which the resident foreigner would be immune.

Egyptians have here a very real cause of complaint. England and America would doubtless forego these extravagant privileges, but some of the smaller Powers would raise difficulties, and in the absence of unanimous consent, it is impossible to abolish the injustice.

*Judicial System.*

An exhaustive examination of the complicated and conflicting jurisdictions of Egypt would occupy too much space for a work of this nature. Suffice it to say that Egyptians are in all cases subject to their native courts, except when in civil litigation with foreigners, but the latter are never subject to the jurisdiction of native courts.

All cases, civil and criminal, between natives of Egypt are tried by native courts and the jurisprudence applied follows closely that of the Code Napoléon. A European accused of a criminal offence is always tried by his own Consular court and civil cases between foreigners of the same nationality are also under the jurisdiction of their Consulates.

In Turkey nevertheless a European accused of a criminal offence against an Ottoman subject was tried by an Ottoman Court, though sentence could not be executed unless the judgment was signed and approved by a delegate of his Consulate. It would appear impossible to trace how this Capitulatory privilege became extended in the case of Egypt to the right of trial in all criminal cases by the Consular Court of the accused.

Matters of personal status in the case of Moslem and

non-Moslem Egyptians are left to the jurisdiction of Ecclesiastical Courts. The case of a British Egyptian Jew who obtained a divorce from his local religious authorities, which was subsequently nullified by British Courts, brought this conflict into prominence. But in practice all local Egyptians of whatever creed are subject to their particular canonical law in matters of personal status.

The modifications effected in the Code Napoléon as interpreted in Egypt appear to suit the country, for the administration of justice, while perhaps not up to the best European standards, works smoothly and well. Foreigners in criminal cases are judged according to their respective jurisdictions and are amply protected in civil cases by the presence in the Mixed Courts of Judges of every nationality. Belgians, Portuguese, Greeks, Swedes and Spaniards are included as well as representatives of the Great Powers.

This judicial labyrinth would appear too complicated to be really efficient, but nevertheless the administration of justice in Egypt leaves little margin for complaint and the maze is by no means as inextricable as it might seem to be on the surface.

An amusing illustration of the complication of jurisdictions in Egypt is afforded by one of those trenchant judgments for which Mr. Cameron, late H.B.M. Consul-General at Alexandria, was famous. A very small Norwegian boy was brought before the Consular Court during the War under an agreement between the Powers that the nationality of seamen should follow that of the ship they serve on for the

trial of offences committed in connection with their service. Mr. Cameron asked him, with a rising and terrifying inflection, "Do you know what happens to Norwegian boys, who desert from British ships in Egyptian territorial waters?" The trembling lad answered "No, Sir." "No more do I," said Mr. Cameron and left the Court. He was of course competent, but chose this way of letting the boy off. Cases of mutiny, desertion and drunkenness were multiplied during the War, owing perhaps to the dangers and difficulties to which the merchant service was exposed. While he always tempered justice with clemency, Mr. Cameron kept the disorderly elements of the Port well in hand. I am glad, too, to pay this small tribute to the competent handling of the many problems of shipping by this most efficient of Consuls-General during this time. The Consul's job is always a thankless one, but Mr. Cameron's great services went unrewarded and perhaps unappreciated.

### *Aspects of the Capitulations.*

As the Capitulations entail both immunity from taxation and extraterritorial jurisdiction, the two questions have been dealt with together. But while it must be realized that the former constitutes a very real grievance, which might almost be stigmatized as an injustice imposed on the Egyptians, the latter are an essential safeguard for Europeans living and trading in Egypt and are even beneficial to the country as a whole.



The thin veneer of civilization acquired by the countries of the Near East is entirely the work of the foreigner and the Levantine and has only been made possible by the Capitulations. Foreign capital and enterprise is assured of interpretation of their contracts by European judges. If litigation arising from the activities of foreigners were subjected to the jurisdiction of native courts the main support of the frame work of civilization would be removed, and the country's business come to a standstill. They are therefore an earnest for decent behaviour, though the hardship and injustice they entail are generally recognized as regrettable.

Comparison between the treatment of Turkey in this respect by the Allies at Lausanne and their attitude towards the abolition of the Capitulations in Egypt, which was proposed during the Protectorate, affords a striking anomaly. France and Italy would not hear of any derogation from their capitulatory rights in Egypt, where forty years of British Administration has produced order out of chaos and trained a nucleus of responsible and reliable officials. The type is still in the minority but it does exist and if the officials of the next generation are modelled on it, something approaching European standards can be expected from them.

The Allies saw fit, however, to hand over such of their nationals, who were unwise enough to live in Turkey, to the tender mercies of far less civilized Angora. Perhaps it was a case of "force majeure." We have been told so often that peace had to be made

at any price, and I found at Lausanne that by a process of auto-suggestion the members of all the delegations had come to believe it. Towards the end of the Conference it presented the undignified spectacle of the victorious Allies jumping through hoops under the whip of the Turkish ringmaster. Unfortunately there was no body of public opinion at home or among our Allies to insist on the necessary safeguards for established interests and for future business operations in Turkey.

Egyptian governing classes have had more experience of European methods than the Turks and are now certainly fitter to exercise authority over Europeans. A demand for the abolition of the Capitulations in Egypt can be safely predicted in the next few years and having made the concession in the case of Turkey, it will be difficult to find logical grounds for refusing equal treatment in the case of Egypt.

*Government by Egyptians.*

Hitherto ultimate authority has nearly always been vested in Europeans and in most Departments in Englishmen. The country has therefore been administered on British lines in the broad aspect, though rigid adherence to our principles and standards was of course impossible and every allowance was made for native susceptibilities. Nevertheless, owing to the fact that the Levant absorbs French culture much more readily than British, the civilization which has been imposed on Egypt is cosmopolitan and continental in character.

Egypt is enjoying to-day a very real independence, though the persistent clamour of the Nationalists for further concessions has not abated one jot or tittle and from this the outside world is apt to deduce that the self-government accorded them is only an illusion and a sham.

It is interesting to speculate in what direction Egyptian tendencies will now move. We have no precedent of the sudden emancipation of a Mahomedan country from European influence on which to base an opinion. Further, some believe that Egyptians have really acquired the beginnings of a European culture ; others again that the thin veneer of civilization is entirely the work of the foreign elements in the land and will either gradually wear away or will disappear at a stroke when exposed to the heat of Mahomedan reaction.

All departments and public services have been modelled according to the conceptions of the European adviser attached to the Ministry. The methods of the "rond de cuir" have been imported in certain cases from the Quai d'Orsay ; the accumulation of "paperasses" presents no terrors to the Egyptian Government clerk, in fact he likes it ; in others the bureaucratic system of Whitehall has been superimposed on the relics of the Turkish pashawlic, and in a few a clean sweep has been made and entirely new methods evolved.

Lord Cromer stated that these measures have resulted in the creation of the most complicated Government machinery that the world has ever

known, and was extremely dubious whether Egyptians would be able to cope with its complexities.

It largely depends on the interpretation of the Egyptian national slogan. "Masr lil Masryin" (Egypt for the Egyptians), irrespective of creed, would imply the employment of a number of the more gifted Levantines and would not necessarily connote the elimination of the foreign element, though they will in future take their orders from the Egyptian Minister. In this case we may expect a normal development along present lines, though in the more technical branches of the administration the deterioration, which has already set in, cannot but become more marked.

But for 90 per cent. of the population "Masr lil Masryin" is synonymous with "Masr lil Muslimin" (Egypt for the Moslems). The leaders recognize their shortcomings, but they dare not avow them. They have so long insisted on Egypt's capacity for self-government, that it will be difficult for them to refuse to replace all foreigners by Egyptians immediately. Almost the same percentage are quite illiterate and completely ignorant of the outside world; they are also convinced of the superiority of Islam over all other forms of culture. This opinion is shared indeed by great numbers of the educated and politically minded classes, and those who really think that a European form of civilization is preferable to their own are in an extremely small minority. There has hitherto been no open avowal of a popular desire to revert to Oriental and Asiatic standards, but in

the mass of the nation it undoubtedly exists. Occasionally even the highest in the land give curious indications of a spirit of revolt against everything European. I am told, for instance, on the best authority that a certain high official has solemnly introduced as a serious reform the abolition of the European W.C. and its replacement by the native variety.

Again European officials in this department must in future write their reports in Arabic. If the latter measure is generally adopted—and I understand that it will shortly be so—it can only result in the weeding out of every foreign expert from the cadres of the Government, or by duplicating their posts by attaching to every foreigner in Government employ an expert translator, who has also the necessary technical knowledge.

The mathematical and mechanical side of modern life does not and perhaps never will appeal to the Oriental. He realizes that its complexities are beyond his powers. They have a fundamental aversion for the cold reason and hard logic which govern our words and actions and cannot understand our passion for accuracy. Above all they never forgive the West for destroying the glamour of the East and for eliminating the picturesque from their lives. The fortunes of the Barber of Bagdad and the good old days when illiteracy was no bar to the highest honour in the state still haunt their memories. No European can follow the tortuous and inconsequential reasoning which governs their actions and the fanciful imagery,

in which the Oriental's mind habitually roams, is a closed book to him.

It is said that when the Senussi first saw an aeroplane, the report got about that there was a "Rukh" (Roc bird, from the "Arabian Nights") abroad in the land; and a tale I heard of an aviator, who made a forced landing in an outlying district, well illustrates that vagueness which is a marked characteristic of the Eastern mind. He was relating his experiences to some natives who had collected through one who had a little English, and was asked what would happen if he got more than half way to the moon. Someone interjected, "Don't you know that the moon is forty thousand parasangs distant from the earth?" but when asked what a parasang was, he replied, "By Allah, I do not know."

This vagueness and lack of ability or even desire to view things from the point of view of cold reason permeates all classes. In fact the Oriental reacts rather to sentiment than to logic. The systematic and methodical features of all European forms of Government are incomprehensible to them and in their conception of justice, that clear-cut division between right and wrong, which is common to all peoples of the West, does not exist. It is true that their leaders pay lip service to our ideals, but those who imagine that they voice the opinion of the masses display complete ignorance of Eastern mentality.

For a time indeed they will endeavour to live up to the exotic standards that have been imposed on them, and, as in the spacious days of Ismail, will

continue to throw dust in the eyes of Europe. But actually the measures they will adopt for Westernising the country will be just as real as the franchise accorded to all and sundry by the Young Turks after the 1908 rebellion, and the political rights of local minorities will be as scrupulously observed as were those of the Armenians.

Look at it from their point of view. Why indeed should they adopt an alien and uncongenial system, especially when in many respects it differs from their own conception of morality? The mass of Egyptians are deeply religious, and their sacred Book, the Koran, plays an incredibly larger rôle in national life than does the Bible with us. The desire to revert to their own standards cannot but meet with our sympathy and good wishes, now that the initial mistake of relaxing our hold on the most important strategic position in the world has been made. Egyptians must evolve on their own lines and may one day revive the glories of early Moslem civilization, which bridged the gulf between Byzance and the Renaissance.

A slavish copying of European institutions can but be a parody. The few who hold to the belief that Egyptians can produce sufficient men of the requisite training, intellect and character to create and conduct a state, civilized in the European sense, may find justification in future developments; but Egypt's best course is clearly to stick to the essentials of material progress, i.e., irrigation, railways, etc., and for the rest to develop indigenous institutions.

Forgetting for the moment that the retention of our control over the Suez Canal is a matter of life and death for the British and that every concession in Egypt must do harm to our cause, it must then be admitted that in the eyes of the Egyptians there was no particular attraction in being immolated on the altar of Empire and that the whole nation will be happier to a man, though not so well off materially, when the irksome incubus of an alien domination with its unwelcome ideals has been removed and they can get down to good old Nile earth once more.

*Malevolence Towards British Officials.*

An unpleasant feature of the new régime is the obvious desire of the present Egyptian Government to discredit by every means in their power those high British officials who have rendered them the greatest services in the past.

They have recently called into question the administration of the State Domains, which for many years has been in the charge of Mr. Anthony. Again they have severely censured the handling by the Ministry of Communications of the contracts for the dredging of Suez by the great Dutch firm of Bos. This latter affair had already been submitted to the neutral arbitration of the late Mr. Macquorcadale (of the Waterworks), who decided in favour of the contracting firm.

A certain complexion put on the question by the action of the Egyptian Government in calling the officials in charge before a Council of Discipline



characterizes their action as despicable. It was also stated that owing to his retirement, Sir George Macaulay would not have to attend before the Council. In view of the immense services of the latter to Egypt during the many years he was in charge of the railways, which under his administration might have served as a model for any system in the world, these implications must also carry the stigma of base ingratitude. However the high character of all the officials involved and the great reputation they have always enjoyed for efficiency and incorruptibility, coupled with the services they have rendered, which are open for all to see, make the allegations of the Egyptian Government puerile. So they defeat their own ends by their patent bias.

It should not be overlooked that we are dealing here with Orientals, who may have many excellent qualities, but whose ideas of honour and fair play differ completely from ours. Many such allegations will be levelled against us in future and whenever anything goes wrong in Egypt the Government will always attempt to make a scapegoat of some unfortunate British official of the old régime. It is said that nowadays any failure of the water supply is immediately attributed to the engineers of the Makwar dam, which is not yet even completed.

A typical instance of this lack of gratitude is provided by the Howard Carter incident. It would be difficult to overestimate the services rendered to the country by this Egyptologist. The hotel king of Egypt, Mr. Charles Baehler, is reputed to have said

that the influx of tourists following on the discovery of the tomb brought £60,000 in one year into his own pocket. At any rate it has doubled the tourist traffic, which ranks very high in the economics of Egypt. This service alone, ignoring that which he has rendered to science, should have entitled him to every consideration.

But this is an old tale of woe and dates back to some twenty years ago, when Howard Carter was an official of the Antiquities Department, in charge of the excavations of Sakhara. The Bedouin watchmen of the Serapeum, where the sacred bulls were buried, eke out the small salary they receive by providing candles to visitors, who naturally reward them with a few piastres. A party of French mechanics from the gasworks of Cairo omitted the small formality on leaving and were roughly handled by the Bedouin. A complaint was made to their Diplomatic Agent that Mr. Howard Carter had not seen fit to sympathize with them. Mariette Pasha, who was in charge of the department, offered to make things smooth if Carter would only present an official apology to the French Minister. On his refusal he was asked to resign. The incident was never forgotten or forgiven by the Department, which has always been under a Frenchman.

An endless series of pinpricks following on the discovery of the tomb terminated in the unfortunate incident of last winter. Mr. Carter acted unwisely, but undoubtedly under great provocation. Whatever can be said on both sides, impartial observers

cannot but realize that every facility and every consideration should have been afforded him, and were not. Whether the French and Egyptian officials in charge were actually discourteous as he states is open to doubt, but there is no doubt that there was a considerable amount of obstruction encountered and an obvious desire to limit his freedom of action and later even to discredit him. Jealousy on the part of the Department is alleged to have been partly the cause of the quarrel and much of it too is ascribed to anti-British feeling on the part of Egyptian Ministers. The Zaglulists made much capital of it and lost no opportunity for comparing Mr. Carter's proprietary attitude with that of the British officials in other departments.

The incident affords another example of the treatment Englishmen of attainments, who have rendered great services to Egypt, have already been experiencing and will now more than ever receive at the hands of the Egyptian Government.

## IV EDUCATION

THE most complex of all questions in the administration of subject races is education. Instruction is so easy to impart, but education in the French sense, the improvement of the moral and social fibre, is a gradual and imperceptible growth. But where the French have the advantage over us in the more exact definition afforded by the use of the two words "instruction" and "éducation," our language has a term to describe the products of moral and mental teaching, which all others have had to borrow, that is the elastic term "gentleman." A spongelike quality of grey matter is a common attribute of the Oriental, who however falls readily into the error that absorption of Western facts and figures make him the equal of the European. Yet the "gentleman," not always of high scholastic attainments, whose handling of the Sudan has called forth the most flattering comments from Roosevelt and other impartial observers, has certain qualities which fit him for the task; all that can be learnt in the Lycées of Paris or the Universities of Leipzig and Berlin by the nimblest witted effendi cannot give him the "éducation," which is the keystone of our success in the government of subject races.

Outward and visible signs of prosperity and good government are often mistaken by sympathetic observers as a manifestation of an inward and spiritual grace. They see the orderly harbour of Alexandria ; the highly efficient railways : cleanly and prosperous Cairo ; the glib effendi with his fluent French, whose every phrase is culled from " l'Humanité " or " l'Intransigeant " and they say " why, these are people like ourselves and the principle of self-determination should apply to them, if to any subject race."

They do not pause to think that all this order, all this efficiency, all this prosperity has been imposed on the land. In the frequent hunger strikes for their old Oriental beliefs and customs, forced feeding has been resorted to on many occasions. In fact the country has been stuffed with reform like a Strassbourg goose.

Education is the crux of the problem of the colonial administrator. He starts from the premise that the main object of his work is to raise the moral and intellectual tone of the country for which he is responsible. Yet he realizes that any form of Western education immediately instils in the minds of its recipients the idea of mental and racial equality, and that as soon as one per cent. of the population has learnt to do their sums, they turn all their acquired learning to agitation among their ignorant fellow countrymen.

It is a difficulty which all colonizing Powers have to face. The dark days of the Congo are past and the colonial administrator has now to justify himself

before the world. If he creates institutions which enable a handful to acquire the learning of the West, he knows in his heart of hearts that that handful will be the leaven of agitation which will raise the whole loaf. If he does not, he will be deemed to have failed in the object of his mission, which is the mental and moral uplift of the country he administers.

It is much to the credit of British proconsuls everywhere that they have wittingly preferred to take the risk rather than incur the stigma of an ignoble egotism.

Sir Valentine Chirol is much too sweeping in his condemnation of the educational system in Egypt. He leaves one with the impression of the youth of the country clamouring round the portals of the schools with the British schoolmaster in the rôle of a hard-faced janitor grudgingly admitting them one by one. Much to the contrary such facilities as do exist are entirely the work of the British and foreigners, Egyptians going in the main to the schools created for them by British Advisers to the Ministry of Education, sometimes in the face of opposition, and the Levantine to the missionary and charitable institutions which abound for his benefit.

It should be remembered that these are not a development of indigenous institutions and that there was no groundwork on which to build. It cannot even be said that our educational system in Egypt was grafted on to one already existing. It is rather a separate growth which has been created and the impossible in biology has thus been achieved in the realm of education.

It will be objected that schools, hospitals and other institutions on European lines were founded by the enlightened Mohamed Ali and his successors and greatly developed by Ismail Pasha. In name and on paper indeed they did exist and the Nationalist has taken full advantage of this nebulous existence for propaganda purposes. He avers even that the British have not only done nothing to develop the institutions with which the progressive rulers of pre-Occupation days endowed the country, but that they have on the contrary done much to hinder the march of reform in matters of education. The deception practiced by Ismail on Europe was so pitiable and has been so often exposed, that it is not necessary to go over the old ground again. The embryonic Law School and the chaotic School of Medicine, which Lord Cromer found on taking office, must have been rather a hindrance than a help—much as a builder often has to pull down a ruinous construction the better to raise an adequate building. The same can be said of the other educational institutions, which were spasmodically functioning up to 1882.

The Egyptian is by nature a “mauvais payeur” and this characteristic is most marked in matters of education. He wants it free. According to him the “Hukuma” (the Government) ought to provide all education.

There are many complaints of the small number of Egyptian medical men available, but the Egyptian parent will not part with the heavy fees which medical training demands. A more

general dissemination of higher education is impossible under these conditions.

If the results have been poor, surely this should be laid rather to the door of the Egyptians themselves. In no country that the writer is aware of is education exclusively the affair of the State. In the case of the British indeed less so than with most Western nations. But with all, individual enterprise on the part of the teacher and the desire for education on the part of the pupil and his parents have contributed to the solution of the problem. Let us examine the showings of the Egyptians in these two respects.

The private school in Egypt, conducted for gain, and those attached to Mosques or endowed by the Wakfs (Ministry of Pious Foundations), at which the majority of Egyptians learn their A B C, impart a schooling which would have been considered barbarous in the Middle Ages. Recitations from the Koran in archaic Arabic, which most of the pupils do not even understand, the thousand rules of grammar, and caligraphy are to all intents and purposes the sole subjects of the curriculum. On the grounds of non-interference in questions of religion, which has always been the cardinal tenet of British Colonial administration, it has been impossible to exercise any control over the activities of the Wakfs. And if the Egyptian is to-day backward and illiterate, the blame attaches to the paralyzing influence of the Wakfs and El Azhar.

The frittering away of funds, which should have been applied to the dissemination of real education,



in bolstering up ancient sophistries may be regrettable, but the British have hitherto refused to constitute themselves arbiters in questions of religion and until they do so (which I hope and believe will be never) and as long as in Mahomedan countries secular and religious educations are indivisible, reform must come from within.

Elementary education is imparted by the village Kuttab and the Mosque school and much, if not most, of the pupil's time is devoted to memorizing the Koran. Some progress had been made in the realm of higher education and it had been definitely freed from the reactionary influence of El Azhar, but of late the tendency has been retrograde. This is explained by those most competent to form an opinion by the reinstatement of the Arabic language as the vehicle of instruction, in consequence of public clamour some twenty years ago. Arabic would appear to be an impossible medium for conveying modern human thought, and as long as its use is insisted on it is difficult to see how this obstacle can ever be circumvented.

In view of the lack of conviction on the part of Egyptians themselves and of the insufficiency of funds, British Advisers to the Ministry of Education are rather to be congratulated on the results obtained. If the money spent on the village Kuttab and Mosque school went to swell the funds of those institutions in which European methods and standards are applied, there might be sufficient accommodation for those Egyptians, who we are told are athirst

for knowledge, and from whose lips, it has even been insinuated, the Machiavellian British wittingly withhold the cup.

In a word, it is doubtful whether the nation as a whole desires Western education, but with the granting of independence this point will shortly be elucidated. Egyptians certainly do not wish to pay for it, and even the most advanced Nationalists cannot reconcile themselves to sacrificing their old inhibitions and shibboleths and will insist on the elimination of foreign teachers and foreign tongues. The retrograde movement will therefore become more marked than it has been of late, since the introduction of the vernacular in the higher schools.

Ever ready to minimize the difficulties of the creation and conduct of Western institutions and always over-sanguine of his own powers, the Nationalist decided in 1909 to have his own University on the most approved European lines. Saad Pasha Zaglul took a leading part in its creation. Its portals were thrown open with loud hosannas and, thanks to an annual grant of £2,000 from the Ministry of Education, have remained so, though I believe I am right in saying that no degree has been conferred on any of its alumni nor are their diplomas recognized anywhere. An occasional conference is held there, and a distinguished Spanish Orientalist delivers at long intervals a series of lectures in Arabic on European philosophy to a handful of students.

This is the only attempt which has been made by Egyptians to provide facilities for those who desired

a University education on Western lines. The result has been farcical and statesmen in favour of granting independence to all and sundry would do well to ponder on the achievements of Egyptians in this field.

But they have their own University in El Azhar. There can be not less than 20,000 students there, many of whom have free board as well as free tuition.

It is impossible for any European to understand, and much less to explain, the fundamental divergence of views between the East and the West, which is here shown in the brightest of lights. Weary days, months and years are spent in commentating the Koran and the Traditions. Quite frequently one meets some poor old savage from Central Africa wearing the turban, which is the sign of the "Alim" (singular of Ulema), who has been at the centre of Mahomedan learning for twenty or thirty years and has learnt to recite long passages from the Koran, which he doesn't understand, and nothing whatever besides.

The Sheri or Sacred Law has been handed down intact from the seventh century. Conservatism is a most valuable trait in a nation's character, but can one imagine a state of society at home governed rigidly by laws laid down by the learned men of the time of Ethelred the Unready?

Lord Milner, in commenting on a judgment delivered by the exponents of the Sacred Law in a case of brigandage in Egypt, qualified it as barbarous bosh. Matters of personal status are entirely governed by it, but nowadays criminal and civil jurisdiction

outside these matters is based on the Code Napoleon.

The writer's vague reminiscences of the Sheri are chiefly of interminable pages devoted to the question of the right of property in an animal caught in a net but coming from the property of a neighbour, and again the fearful complications of the water rights from a spring which in coming down the hillside traversed the properties of 'Amr and Zayd.

The Western mind, in sounding the futility of the interminable discussions on these and similar matters, passes through the successive stages of ridicule, compassion, and finally bewilderment. I believe, however, that the solution lies in the complete lack of appreciation on the part of the East of all that the West knows as progress.

The European is all too ready to attribute the larger luxury afforded by machinery and the general enjoyment of the excitements of mechanical invention to some inherent superiority. This the East denies.

The Oriental is quite ready to avail himself of such Western luxuries as he can afford, as for instance the motor car, but he has not the remotest respect for the man that built it. Yet he admires skill in riding, shooting or any form of sportsmanship. He may even admit a certain intellectual superiority in technical matters, but in nothing else. The most self-satisfied and arrogant outlook on life is that of the Moslem Alim. Since all knowledge is contained in the Koran and the Hawadith, it is readily comprehensible that if you know them by heart the rest

of the world must be at a terrible disadvantage. The West bears up with a brave show of equanimity, but the East despises us all the same for our misguided ignorance of fundamental matters.

Now the cost of providing professorial staff and in many cases board and lodging for some 20,000 students must be enormous, but can blame be attached to the British Adviser to the Ministry of Education if the available funds are badly applied? If the money spent on El Azhar and its affiliated colleges in the provinces were devoted to the spread of Western education, Egypt could well afford a Sorbonne of its own.

A good Mahomedan will invariably leave some small legacy to the Wakfs, where it is dribbled and frittered away, and if any of it is applied to education, it goes to El Azhar, which is the very negation of all that the West understands as education and results in the narrowing rather than in the broadening of the mind.

The Greek, the Syrian, the Jew and every other community of Egypt have their fine schools, well housed and liberally supplied with European teaching staff, and these schools are entirely due to the generosity of munificent patrons, in their creation, and to funds supplied by the communities themselves, in their upkeep. What is to prevent the Mahomedan from doing as much for his own people? And why blame the Educational system and the British Adviser, when patron, teacher and pupil at best only half comprehend the value of Western education

and at worst in their heart of hearts are profoundly antagonistic to it ?

So much then has the Egyptian done for the cause of education in his own country and the result has been negative, as most of the funds available have been absorbed in reality for the propagation of Islam. Instead of assisting enlightenment and progress, they have still further determined the crystallization of Mahomedan formalism.

To turn to that "rush for education," which Sir Valentine Chirol avers British Educational Authorities in Egypt have done so little to satisfy, to me the facts would seem rather to be that there are means of satisfying it, of which Egyptians do not avail themselves.

There is probably a longer waiting list at Winchester than at the various schools whose accommodation he describes as inadequate. But boys can obtain quite a respectable schooling elsewhere (though this may be denied by Wykehamists). So too there are in Egypt a number of foreign institutions which open their doors to all and sundry. These are mostly due to missionary enterprise, but some have been endowed by the patriotic Greek or some philanthropic Levantine. Admittance to the latter is generally, but not always, limited to the community of the benefactor. The Victoria College at Ramleh, the only English institution of the kind, if we except a Kindergarten at Gezira for the children of officials, has a number of Mahomedan pupils. But without having definite figures, I am prepared to state that in schools of this

category, who cater for every denomination, irrespective of creed, not ten per cent. of the pupils are Moslems. When it is remembered that they are in a majority of ten to one in the country, it will be seen that the proportion of Mahomedans, as compared to Levantines and local non-Moslems, who avail themselves of the facilities which abound for acquiring Western education and which are so generously offered to all, is one per cent. Again, is one to blame the British system for this? Egyptians have done their best to render nugatory these attempts at affording additional educational channels by insisting that the teaching of such colleges will not be considered as qualifying for that Mecca of every Oriental student—Government employ. It would have been reasonable only to accept real Egyptians after test, but to debar students from these colleges seems very narrow indeed. The Copt, the Syrian and the Levantine generally eagerly frequent the institutions created by American missionary philanthropy and French politico-missionary activity, but not so the Moslem, whose atavistic mistrust of Christian teaching make him apprehensive of possible apostacy, if he delivers his children to the care of the proselytizing Giaour.

But having once embarked on a programme of developing a system of self-government for Egypt, by which is implied government on European lines and not according to their own rude lights, the Adviser responsible for Education had to proceed with his thankless task nearly always in the face of a deep-rooted, though covert, antagonism. Exception

should be made here for the small leaven of really enlightened Egyptians; a number of the most distinguished men in the country have been educated at Jesuit and other foreign schools and the difference between them and their less fortunate countrymen is most marked and forms one of the best arguments for European education which could be adduced for, but which is tacitly ignored by, the Moslems of Egypt.

It has been pointed out on several occasions elsewhere that the argument that England has done nothing for Egypt except develop her material prosperity can be refuted by calling attention to the small nucleus of individuals who have enjoyed a proper education and who can take their place among Europeans of similar standing anywhere. It is my contention that the granting of independence before this nucleus was large enough to take charge was a misfortune for the country. The small boy's ambition wavers between the glories of the career of an engine driver or the agreeable promiscuity of a bus-conductor's existence. The fond parent is secretly flattered by the display of so much originality and imagination and is apt to commiserate in his heart with his less fortunate neighbours for their humdrum progeny. All children have their little dreams however, and all wise parents sympathize with them, but the scarcely felt exercise of parental authority helps them over their early blunders and guides them in the choice of a future. Young Egypt has been left too early to its own devices.



Having sown the seed of enlightenment and watched the plant put forth its first young shoots, we have now withdrawn the shelter of our control. The Nationalists contend that it will grow into a hardier plant, but most European observers are rather of the opinion that exposure may cause it to wither or even die. Lord Cromer's views on this subject are so illuminating that I need no excuse for repeating them in full :

“To suppose that the characters and intellects of even a small number of Egyptians can in a few years be trained to such an extent as to admit their undertaking the sole direction of one of the most complicated political and administrative machines which the world has ever known, and of guiding such a machine along the path of even fairly good government, is a sheer absurdity. I must apologize to those of my readers who have any real acquaintance with Egyptian affairs for indulging in platitudes of this description. If I do so, it is because it would appear that the race of those who dream dreams of real autonomy in the very near future is not yet extinct.”

This was written only some seventeen years ago, and while there has been undoubtedly a considerable increase in the attendance at schools, though no improvement in standards, in the intervening generation, his argument still holds good and will continue to do so for as long as Mahomedan Egypt retains its self-imposed fetters in the essential problem of education.

There is another natural obstacle, which as far as I

can see, cannot conceivably be circumvented. It is the language.

A somewhat detailed study under Professor Browne, the most brilliant of Orientalists and most genial of preceptors, at Cambridge, followed by ten years residence in the country, left me with the impression that Arabic is an impossible medium for conveying modern human thought.

The literary language which it is still "de rigueur" to use in writing is the same to a letter as it is in the Koran and the spoken tongue is hardly recognizable as the same language. It is held that every word was inspired and is therefore sacred for all time. Suppose our professors had to lecture and our commercial houses to carry on their correspondence in Aramaic or Alexandrine Greek, on the ground that our Gospel had been inspired in one or other of these tongues, certain inconvenience would doubtless be experienced. But it is much worse in Arabic, where you have a hundred words for a lion and countless ones for a camel, including one, meaning a she-camel blind in the left eye, which gave its name to a famous battle in early Mahomedan history, but none for a typewriter.

The grammar too is so complicated that its mastery absorbs many years of the pupil's early life, which might well be applied to the acquiring of other knowledge. Vowels and the signs which used to denote them, but which are not now employed, are practically non-existent, except for "Alif," the long A, and "wow," which is occasionally used as our U.

This increases the difficulty of reading Arabic enormously for foreigners and must present some complications even for educated Egyptians.

I have said enough to show that in my opinion the clumsy knife of Arabic cannot possibly compete with the high speed tool of English, French or German.

The only tangible result of the form of literary education with which the West endows the East is the speeding-up of the manufacture of demagogues. But recently some little effort has been made in Egypt under the able direction of Mr. Truman and others to revive the arts and crafts for which the country was so distinguished in Saracenic times. Brass work in particular, as also to some extent wood carving, was then at its apogee and in the case of metal work the extraordinary delicacy and artistic conception of the designs, coupled with their faultless execution, have made of Saracenic brass and copper the world's finest examples of the metal worker's art. It is this spirit that the small and devoted band of that branch of the Ministry of Education has been trying to revive, but the divine efflatus cannot be inspired and their efforts will, I fear, only result in tawdry imitation.

A most interesting instance of that strange immutability of the East, which is its strongest characteristic, is afforded by a small wooden chest which was found in Tut Ankh Amen's tomb. It was inlaid with ivory in a star pattern. The writer has one in his possession dating from the early Saracenic period, which is similar in every detail. And to-day in the bazaars you will find the native workman

bending over his bench and reproducing the same old design in the same old way.

It is an additional striking instance of the hold of tradition on the mind of the Oriental.

*The Harim System as a Barrier to Education.*

Lord Cromer and other authorities attribute much of the backwardness of the East to the seclusion of women. Christian communities, where a mitigated form of the harim system prevails, such as the Copts, are behindhand as compared with those who practice complete emancipation of their womenfolk. No better proof could be wanted of the inherent weakness of the Islamic conception of woman's status.

The Egyptian daughter of well-to-do parents nowadays has her European governess, but with very few exceptions is only expected, or indeed permitted, to imbibe the rudimentary elements of education, and from her earliest puberty is secluded from all contact with the male world until her marriage. I have known a number of cases of families of the very first rank in Egypt who do not allow even male relatives to visit the mistress of the house. In one case, indeed, the brother was debarred.

Until the age of twelve or so the Egyptian girl gets a glimpse of the outside world, from which thenceforth she is completely shut off. Their chief occupation in life thus becomes the care of the home in its narrowest and most material sense. Their only distractions are visits to the harims of their friends; and their only pleasure the eating of sweets with an

occasional visit to one or other of the "Franghi" stores, for the purchase of the gaudiest silks obtainable.

The charming Opera House in Cairo has even Harim boxes, where the great ladies sit veiled from the audience by a thick curtain. It is rare enough indeed that these boxes are occupied.

The Covent Garden flower girl has her wits at least sharpened by contact with a rude world. Even this elementary form of mental training is denied the Oriental woman, and of education in the Western sense she has none whatever. If the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world, what can be expected from children brought up by mothers whose whole lives are regulated on the lowest conceivable material plane?

There is a strong movement for the emancipation of women in Turkey, but it is generally felt that a sudden removal of age-old shackles may result in unbridled licence. So strong is the belief in woman's frailty throughout the East that even rigid seclusion does not allay the doubts and fears of the menfolk, and the practice of clitorotomy is general.

It is remarkable that in spite of all the opportunities Egypt has enjoyed of a closer contact with the West, Turkey has gone much farther on the road to progress in this direction. Since the War very great strides have been made, and the greatest service rendered by Mustafa Kemal to the country may in future be considered his far-reaching reforms in the way of emancipation of women, rather than the expulsion

of the Greeks from Asia Minor. There are shops even in the Grande Rue de Pera where one is served by a Turkish woman with a modified form of yashmak. The veil has almost gone, but it is still considered highly improper to uncover the hair.

One cannot but feel that the East does not desire to adopt the European form of civilization and that any reforms in this direction are imposed on the masses by a few enlightened spirits and are carried through in spite of general opposition. In the fierce heat of world competition those nations who wittingly refuse to arm one half of their population must necessarily go to the wall, and until the East has put its house in order in this respect they must expect to hew wood and draw water for the West. Monogamy and its resultant comparative chastity has been the main factor in the rapid advancement of the Anglo-Saxon race. Europe emerged from the darkness with the birth of chivalry, and as Mr. W. L. George points out in his work on women, the ballad of the troubadour heralded the dawn of a new era.

The woman of the West has gone a very long way since then, and the emancipation of the human mind seems to have kept pace with every progressive step of her enfranchisement. But the Eastern woman is at exactly the same stage of development as she was in the year of the Hegira, A.D. 632.

Lady Duff Gordon, who lived for many years in Egypt, gives in her book a rather humiliating illustration of the Mahomedan's view of European morality. An aged Sheikh asked her if she could remember any

men among her acquaintances who could say offhand how many women they had known in their lives. He added that in his life he had only known the four women who were in his harim and from this he deduced a moral superiority of the East over the West. But the extreme, and in our eyes, immoral, facility of divorce among Moslems more than counterbalances this argument and in any case chastity, where it is artificially imposed and not spontaneous, ceases to be a virtue.

We are not here concerned, however, with the moral aspects of the question, which the devotees of every religion must decide for themselves, but rather with the effect of the harim system on the bringing up of the young and in this respect seclusion of women can but have deplorable results. The intellectual stagnation induced by severance from all contact with the outside world must perforce be reflected in the children of the race.

## V

### IRRIGATION

It has been remarked elsewhere that every problem in Egypt is connected directly or indirectly with water. The main issues in the Egyptian question, which are still outstanding, are the Suez Canal and the Sudan, and every discussion concerning the latter revolves round the control of the water supply.

The biassed opinions which have been put forward from time to time by technical men who should have known better than to let personal considerations, not to say pique, obscure their judgment, have been so definitely ruled out of court by well-known international authorities that no one, not even the wildest Nationalist, now takes them seriously. But the opposition to the bold conceptions of Sir Murdoch MacDonald and his staff did incalculable harm to the cause of England in Egypt, and if time has cleared the vision of those responsible for it, the disservice they rendered their country must stand out nakedly even before their own eyes. The bogey which has so often been held before the electors at home—your food will cost you more—has a parallel in the most effective weapon which they put in the hands of the Nationalists—fear for the water supply—and the whole Egyptian nation can be stampeded at any moment by adroit exploitation of this fear.



Now Egypt, while showing on the map a superficies of 360,000 square miles, is in reality a tadpole with an elongated tail, the triangular head of which must provide most of the nourishment for a teeming population of some fourteen million souls. The sides of this triangle, with its apex at Cairo, are only some 130 miles in length and the tail runs 700 miles down the river to Wadi Halfa, but is only a thin green ribbon with an average width of five miles. So then this country, which is already as thickly populated as any in the world, must find its sustenance from some 12,000 square miles, as it is impossible to cultivate the desert, most of which lies at a higher level than can be reached by the fertilising waters of the Nile.

A simple calculation shows that every square mile must produce means of living for about a thousand souls, and the population is rapidly growing, in spite of its having already reached the point of saturation. It is an alarming prospect, as Egypt can expand in no direction, and there is only one solution. This solution will indeed confound those whose opposition to the Blue Nile scheme was such a thorn in the side of that devoted band of public servants, who, under the brilliant leadership of Sir Murdoch MacDonald, were changing the face of Egypt and the Sudan, and causing the desert to blossom like a rose.

In a word, further conservation on the upper reaches of the Nile, over and above the Blue Nile scheme which is fast approaching completion, is absolutely essential in order to bring into cultivation

the million and a half acres of Lower Egypt which only await the arrival of the fertilising water and the necessary canalisation and drainage work to produce on the same scale as the 5,000,000 acres already in production. The time will come, and at no very distant date, when Egyptians themselves will clamour for an extension and general application throughout the upper reaches of the Nile of those very works, which they have been so bitterly opposing in the case of the Sennar Dam. In fact, Egypt will not be able to feed its rapidly increasing population in a small number of years, unless the Gebel Aulia reservoir is formed by the construction of a dam on the White Nile just south of Khartoum. Only in this way can sufficient water be stored to irrigate that part of the Delta which must in future provide a livelihood for Egypt's increasing population. Looking still further ahead, a channel must one day be cut through the Sudd region between Mongala and Malakal. The Arabic word "Sudd" means a block or a dam and indicates the rank vegetation which blocks the flow of the water. And finally the waters of Lake Albert must also one day be held up by a dam ; this last will form the most important reservoir of the whole chain.

It is a positive inversion of the truth to pretend that Egypt can be deprived of any of her water by the work so far undertaken. In the first place, the 300,000 feddans (roughly acres) of the Gezira irrigation scheme and indeed the Sudan generally requires water in the winter, whereas Egypt does not need it until the summer. The White Nile, it should be

observed, is free from any artificial obstruction and the water stored at Sennar from the Blue Nile will be utilized during the winter only for the irrigation of the Gezirah, but for the rest of the year will find its way, as in the past, to the fellah's land in the Delta.

It is true indeed that, if and when the whole scheme, i.e. the dam above Khartoum on the White Nile and the proposed Lake Albert reservoir, is completed, it would be possible to deprive Egypt maliciously of her water and even to differentiate unfairly in favour of the Sudan, by keeping Egypt short to the advantage of the latter. But as foretold above, Egyptians in their own interest will come in time to look with favour on the complete project, as in no other way can water for the irrigation of the incompletely cultivated districts be secured.

Means may be found one day of piercing or circumventing the tangled growth of those water plants which choke the river for two or three hundred miles in the Bahr el Gazal region. Again the necessity of developing the present area of Egypt and local requirements in the Mongala province will insist on the reduction of the swamp area. It will be a titanic task, but drained to some extent it will be. It is impossible to foretell the wealth and prosperity which would be brought to Egypt and the Sudan by a free flow of water through this region. In time Egypt will view the enterprise of British irrigation engineers with sympathy, rather than with alarm.

It is well here to quote verbatim the opinion of Lord Milner, expressed thirty years ago. He said,

"it is an uncomfortable thought that the regular supply of water by the great river, which is to Egypt not a question of convenience or prosperity but actually of life, must always be exposed to some risk, as long as the upper reaches of that river are not under Egyptian control.

"Who can say what might happen, if some day a civilized power, or a Power commanding civilized skill, were to undertake great engineering works on the Upper Nile, and to divert for the artificial irrigation of that region the water which is essential for the artificial irrigation of Egypt? Such a contingency may seem very remote. I admit that it is very improbable. But before it is laughed out of court let us consider what would be the feelings of any ordinary country, our own for instance, if there were even a remote possibility that the annual rainfall could be materially altered by the action of a foreign Power."

It is indeed an alarming prospect, if you attribute a wantonly malicious attitude to the controllers of the Upper Nile. But looked at from the point of view of reason, these alarms must tend to disappear. The supply of the best long staple cotton is extremely limited and Lancashire depends more than any other group of textile manufacturers on a steady supply of this quality.

To attribute only the most mercenary motives to every proposal or action of England, as seems to be the fashion among the Nationalists, it must be realized that British Authorities will allow no step to be taken which can in any way affect the volume of long staple

cotton available for this country and for generations the bulk of it must come from Egypt.

The 12,000 square miles of the cultivated land of Egypt produce half the world's supply of the best long staple cotton. In comparison with the six to seven hundred million pounds weight of this quality, which is the amount of the annual Egyptian crop, the Sudan now produces some four millions, or one hundred and fiftieth. The completion of the irrigation programme must take many years and the growth of the Sudan crop must of necessity be extremely gradual. Population enters very largely into the question. Even if the numbers were there, which is far from being the case, the cotton growing fellah is not made in a day. It has been suggested that the only solution of this problem is the wholesale importation of complete esbehs, or villages, of Egyptian fellahin. The Sudanese are accustomed to scratch the earth for a little durra, or maize, and to watch their gaunt cattle grazing where they may, and many foresee that it will be difficult to persuade them to abandon a *dolce far niente* reaching back into a dim past for the arduous cultivation of commercial crops. So then for a very long time Lancashire must depend on Egypt entirely, though will welcome without doubt the small accretion which may now be expected from the Sudan.

The motives which prompted Nationalist Egypt in their violent antagonism to the Sudan projects are open to considerable suspicion, if a cursory survey is taken of the cotton market of the world, during these last ten years or so. The only region which can in any

way compete in the very finest grades is that where the Sea Island cotton is grown along the coasts of Florida. The ravages of the bollweevil and other pests have been such, that in the South Carolina Islands and in Florida and Georgia the annual crop is now less than one-tenth of that produced in pre-war days. The Egyptian output, on the contrary, has more than doubled, as they have reduced the area devoted to the "browns" and very largely extended the cultivation of best "Sakellarides."

It is but natural that Egyptians, finding themselves in virtual control of the world market in producing half the world's supply of high grade cottons in the diminutive compass of their 12,000 square miles, should look with extreme disfavour on any new competitor in the field. In fact this disfavour broke into open resentment when it was found that Sudan cotton fetched a penny a pound more in Liverpool than Egyptian. The ignorant fellah argues that there are 1,000,000 square miles or more of the Sudan which the "afirrit" (by which he means Sir Murdoch MacDonald and his ilk) may bring into cultivation by their machinations, and it is by no means too far fetched to suppose that at the back of their minds was not so much the possibility of lack of water, as even the suspicious native is not so gullible as to believe in a wholesale conspiracy of irrigation engineers the world over and admits the proven scientific fact of the existence of sufficient water for both countries, but rather the certainty that the development of every new field in the Sudan encroaches on the monopoly of

the world supply of long staple cotton, which is their objective. Lancashire takes no sides, but looks on the little struggle with complacency. Her sympathies, which in cotton questions are faithfully reflected in the Government attitude, will tend in future however to be with the Sudanese, as long as nothing is done to harm in any way the Egyptian crop from which for generations the majority of her raw material must be drawn. But the idea of Empire cotton growing is now firmly implanted, the main object being to make Manchester independent of all foreign sources of supply. Egypt can no longer be held to have any connection with the Empire and the irrigation services will in future be under the control of native engineers. There is already a growing doubt whether they will be up to their task and a still further shortage of long staple cotton is predicted. Every extension of the cotton fields of the Sudan helps to allay these fears and incidentally brings nearer the ideal of supplying our needs from within the Empire. Nevertheless Egyptians can rest assured that Lancashire in her own interests will insist on the most liberal treatment of Egypt as regards water supply.

It is the considered opinion of many irrigation engineers, that Sir Murdoch MacDonald and his lieutenants erred, if anything, in the opposite direction and were throughout too generous to Egypt in their calculations and even hard on the Sudan. It is true the population of this vast territory, which is as great as the whole of what we to-day call Western Europe, is probably under 5,000,000; but 100 years

ago before the blight of Mahdism, which in many of its aspects and tenets was an African variety of the virus which is ravaging Russia, fell on the land, it had a population of some 15,000,000 people. Sixty odd years of Egyptian maladministration, culminating in the Mahdia, reduced this to one-tenth, but another fifty years of decent government will most certainly result in the repopulation of the land up to and even exceeding the former figures. There is no doubt that the country can and will feed a population many times that of Egypt within a short period of time, and with this in view it is argued that due regard has not been paid to the future requirements of the Sudan.

For the moment and for as long as one can foresee there will be enough for both countries but indubitably the day will come when the Sudan will have to face the problem of deciding between her own interests and the legitimate claims of Egypt. When this crisis arises, a higher and impartial authority will alone be able to hold the scales justly. Left to the tender mercies of an oligarchical African kingdom, Egypt could whistle for her water and inversely, if brought under the control of the land-owning pashawat of Cairo, who spend their time to-day intriguing with the irrigation engineers for preferential treatment, the Sudan would have very short shrift. Just as an impartial authority protects the plainsman from inroads from the North West Frontier in India and holds the scales between Mahomedan and Hindu, in the best interests of Northern Africa these two



countries must remain in some form or other attached to the British Empire, if one is not to suffer at the expense of the other.

At this point it is interesting to note that, of the three members of the Commission set up to examine the project, which will be given in some detail further on, the neutral American member, Mr. Cory, alone brought out that due regard had not been paid to the future development of the Sudan. From this one can but infer that in his opinion, Sir Murdoch MacDonald was if anything unduly generous to Egypt, particularly in making no provision for the local utilization of surplus Gebel Aulia water, when not required by the Delta.

Mr. Cory pointed out that England was in the position of guardian to two wards, one of which, the Sudanese, cannot voice their own needs. Again the waters now to be conserved are the excess over and above existing rights.

It would seem that the Sudan would have just as good a claim as Egypt, and yet the whole of the storage water of the White Nile dam has been allocated to the Delta.

The view held by British authorities is that the stream must be regarded as an entity, and that the use and conservation of the water is a public trust to be administered in the interests of the beneficiaries and their descendants. The Sudanese are incapable of expressing any opinion at all and the Egyptian is only concerned with his own interests. A Committee of Egyptian engineers urged the following objections

to the programme which well illustrate their egotistical point of view.

Egypt has a vested right in the silt which is brought down annually by the Blue Nile, and has been the fertilizing element from time immemorial. These waters are silty only when in flood, and not more than ten per cent. of the silt can be deposited in the reservoir and this will be in the two flood months when the water is wasting to the sea in large quantities. It is estimated that the net result will be nil, and as the siltless water of the White Nile will be held up by the Gebel Aulia dam until the peak of the Blue Nile flood is passed, the waters below Khartoum in the flood season may be even more heavily charged with silt than in the past.

They object, too, to the construction of control works outside their territory, but irrigation development in Egypt must stop where it is, or they must accept conservation works outside their boundaries, as no further situation exists in Egyptian territory for reservoirs of effective size.

There must be an agreement setting forth the rights and obligations of both parties and to this they are clearly entitled.

It will shortly be possible, they say, to control the supply arbitrarily for political and military purposes and this is true. This aspect will be considered later. And finally it was objected that White Nile water, owing to its passage through swampy and unhealthy districts, would not be as sanitary as that of the Blue Nile. Chemical analysis has dispelled these fears.

It will be seen that the objections formulated by the Committee of Egyptian engineers do not hold water, and indeed have no foundation in scientific fact. But the political issues they raised are very real and, if we had not before our eyes the example of a hybrid administration, the outstanding features of which have always been anomaly and paradox, but which has worked unaccountably smoothly for forty years, one might well despair of finding a *modus vivendi*.

Egypt is independent and British authority is paramount in the Sudan and will remain so. But the neutral member of the Commission appointed to examine the Nile project, Mr. Cory, insisted *inter alia* on the necessity of unity of direction. If there is to be complete cleavage between the two countries, why indeed should Sudan or British money be expended on the White Nile scheme for the exclusive benefit of Egypt? Again as long as Egypt's vested rights are properly respected, and she is allowed the same amount of water, as she is known to have had in the past, there would seem to be no particular reason why all surplus obtained by conservation over and above existing rights should not be allocated to the Sudan. But England is interested in the development and prosperity of Egypt, whether she likes it or not, and Upper Egypt will obtain a greater supply of water for conversion from basin to perennial irrigation and for the increasing sugar crop, and Lower Egypt will extend her cotton fields to the farthest cultivable limit, on the completion of the programme,





SIR MURDOCH MACDONALD

*[To face page 97.]*

elaborated in "Nile Control," by Sir Murdoch MacDonald. It is interesting to note that the American member of the Commission referred to above described this programme as the only practicable one, and further stated that by complete conservancy the waters of the Nile would suffice for all the irrigable areas of Egypt and probably most of those of the Sudan.

Step by step this programme has been built up by the untiring efforts of the Department, but the credit of the correlation and co-ordination of the individual projects into one corporate scheme belongs to Sir Murdoch MacDonald.

### *The Nile Project.*

"Control of the Nile" is the expression most frequently used in discussing the affairs of Egypt and the Sudan. While to the layman the word "control" connotes the idea of political prepotency, the phrase has in reality two widely divergent meanings, which however in their essence will be seen to be related in many respects.

The image presented to the mind of the irrigation engineer by the use of this term will be first examined. It is of course that of controlling the waters of the Nile in such a way as to ensure their maximum exploitation. From the dawn of history, Egypt has depended on the circulation of the waters of this river every bit as much as the individual depends on the circulation of the blood in his arteries. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that from very early

times there has grown up a specific science concerned with the regulation of this flow. From 641 A.D. right up to the present date there is a continuous record of Nile levels at Rhoda.

Mohamed Ali was the first to grasp the advantages to be reaped from perennial irrigation as opposed to the ancient basin system. The increase of wealth following on the introduction of the former and the rapid growth of population have of necessity been followed step by step by measures ensuring an increasing supply of water. All the skill and ingenuity of irrigation engineers has been needed to keep just ahead of requirements. The problem is not so much to store and have at hand sufficient water to meet all immediate needs, though this of course is the first duty of the engineer, but rather to adapt a programme over a number of years, so that at any time in the future, even as much as fifty years ahead, the supply will be sufficient for the increasing area, which is continually being brought into cultivation in order to provide sustenance for the growing population.

Both from the point of view of numbers of its inhabitants and cultivable area, Egypt is fast approaching the point of saturation. There are 7,100,000 acres (or rather feddans, which are for all practical purposes the same) of cultivable land available. Of these, 5,200,000 are at present in production. By adopting in its entirety the scheme which has been elaborated by a succession of the best brains in irrigation matters, culminating in Sir Murdoch MacDonald, the water

BRITISH AGENCY,  
CAIRO.

This seems to me an  
excellent project when  
we have money available  
29 March 12  
Kitchener



needs of every feddan of agricultural land in Egypt will be met by 1955.

A critical technical survey of this scheme is outside the scope of this book, and indeed beyond the capabilities of its author, who lays no claim to the necessary qualifications. But a short examination is of great interest, as the politics of Egypt and the Sudan are indissolubly associated with the question of Nile control; and the logic of the successive steps proposed is patent even to the lay mind.

The first problem to be solved was the augmentation of the summer water supply of Egypt. The building of the Assuan Dam in 1902 and its raising in 1912 conferred such benefits on the country, that it led to a more detailed study for the provision of further water. At the same time it was necessary to protect Egypt from abnormally high floods. The Nile banks have been considerably strengthened, but further control is necessary in order to allow extreme floods to flow through to the sea without danger. The continuous development of agriculture has completely absorbed the increased supplies due to the Assuan dam, and the provision of more storage water is becoming an acute question. The population of Egypt is increasing at the rate of 200,000 souls per annum and cultivable areas must be provided for them.

In the flood season the Blue Nile comes down in spate, but the flow of the White Nile is relatively steady and slow. The works already completed are sufficient to deal with any volume from the former,

and the keystone of the scheme is therefore the construction of an immense reservoir some thirty miles south of Khartoum on the White Nile, which will serve the double purpose of storing 4,000 million cubic metres for transmission to Egypt and of protecting the country from the effects of an abnormally high flood. This work alone will suffice for the reclamation or conversion from basin to perennial of some 900,000 feddans in Egypt, though to guard against the possibility of extremely low Niles, it would be safer to reduce this number very considerably, and even by half. In any case it would be a productive and protective work of the very first order, and is essential for the regulation of the Nile and the prosperity of Egypt. Few other dams combine the varying functions and advantages which will be fulfilled by the White Nile Reservoir.

This project is designed solely for the benefit of Egypt; and the only advantage which can accrue to the Sudan from it, is the periodic flooding of a small tract of land in the immediate neighbourhood of the reservoir, which will be available for "seluka" cultivation, when the waters subside.

The works projected and already in course of erection on the Blue Nile will irrigate the vast triangular plain of heavy black cotton soil, lying to the south of Khartoum between the White and Blue Niles. Roughly 3,000,000 acres are considered irrigable, of which the Sennar Dam, by holding up seven or eight metres, will for the moment feed 300,000, of which only 100,000 would be in cultivation at the

period of shortest supply in the river. The cost of this dam, which is nearing completion, and the canalisation of the land will be over £9,000,000. It is estimated that sufficient water can be stored for the one hundred thousand feddans which at that crucial period will actually require water without detriment to Egypt. The canalisation of the remainder of the vast area will be undertaken in due course when further storage water is provided. It should be remembered that the Sudan requires water in winter and Egypt in summer, and that practically the whole of the storage provided by this scheme will be taken from the river at a time when the water would otherwise flow through to the sea. In considering the possibility of having to meet the needs of further development in the Gezira, an arrangement was made that Egypt should receive compensation water from other sources, if water is ever taken from the Blue Nile at a time when Egypt cannot spare it.

But the rate of development in Egypt has been so rapid owing to the increase of population and the high price of cotton since the war that it is feared that the whole of the extra storage of the White Nile Dam will be shortly required to irrigate newly developed areas in Lower Egypt, thus leaving no margin for compensation for water taken out of the Blue Nile for the Sudan.

Further developments of the Gezira area can be provided for by a dam to be built on the upper reaches of the Blue Nile, capable of holding 7,000 million cubic metres of water, which is more than

sufficient for the complete irrigation of one million acres in the Gezira. One-third of the million feddan area would be fed without drawing on the river supply at all, even during the lowest floods, and in high years this reservoir would fulfil the useful purpose of regulating the flow in Egypt. By the end of the century the Blue Nile will be harnessed in such a fashion as to provide for the needs of Gezira and compensation water to supply any conceivable requirements for Egypt will be available from the Upper reaches of the White Nile.

It has been explained that the proposed dam on this branch just south of Khartoum, the construction of which is held up for the moment, will leave little or no margin for the compensation of Egypt for water abstracted from the Blue Nile for the needs of Gezira, as development is taking place at such a pace that the whole of the extra storage will be absorbed almost as soon as it is provided. Lower Egypt is an insatiable *Oliver Twist* in this respect, so the engineer has to look still further afield and might well pause aghast at the difficulties confronting him at the next step. Water from the Lake district of Equatorial Africa is available in such vast quantities as to open up untold vistas of prosperity for Egypt and the Sudan. But there is a formidable natural obstacle to be overcome in the Sudd region, which extends for some 250 miles from north to south, and anything from five to thirty in breadth. In addition, the Bahr el Gazal swamp area reaches out indefinitely to the West, and the whole of this district forms an immense

sponge which absorbs nearly 20,000 million cubic metres of water annually. The time is approaching when a conduit will have to be provided through this region to lead the waters of Lake Albert through to the White Nile without waste and the estimated cost of the necessary works was, previous to the great increase in costs in recent years, in the neighbourhood of £15,000,000.

Lake Albert itself has very steep sides and its natural features lend themselves readily to the formation of a reservoir. An expenditure here of roughly £2,000,000 was estimated as sufficient for the construction of a dam, again of course before the increase in prices, capable of raising the level of the lake some 25 feet and of holding an additional 40,000 million cubic metres in storage. The possibility of draining the swamp area by this means has been foreseen and indeed the position, climate and rainfall of the Sudd Region render it too valuable to remain for ever a marsh. There is little reason to doubt that it will one day support a thriving pastoral and agricultural population, where now nothing flourishes except dank vegetation and the slimy denizens of the swamp.

It might be thought that the irrigation engineer would here rest on his laurels, as provision has been made for every contingency and every conceivable future requirement of Egypt and the Sudan are thus met. To borrow an image from Goethe, the mind wearies in following him 3,000 miles up the river, mostly through uninhabited and inhospitable regions, but the indefatigable pioneer looks still further ahead

and sees the boundless waters of Lake Victoria before him. A very trifling rise in the level of this Lake would correspond to the storage of many milliards of cubic metres of water and if the white man is left in control of these regions, before the end of the century he will be maturing his plans for harnessing its waters for the benefit of unborn generations. Not only does he make the desert blossom like a rose, but there is even something godlike in work which creates communities and nations in this way.

A word of gratitude for the tremendous services rendered to the people of Egypt by British irrigation engineers would not have come amiss, but not a whisper is heard. The nation is husky with vituperation and to hear them one would imagine that not a decent or selfless act had been performed by British officials since the occupation forty years ago.

Consider now this point—it is an established fact that the Egyptian is incapable of holding his own with the Levant, let alone with Europe, in the smallest commercial or industrial undertakings ; is he or is the Englishman better fitted to undertake and carry on work of this magnitude, on which the prosperity and livelihood of present and future generations depend ?

In the interest of the Egyptians themselves, not to mention the Sudanese, the folly of pretending that England can ever abandon the Sudan to Egypt becomes at once abundantly clear.

*Political and Strategic Considerations  
of Nile Control.*

The national status of the Nile bids fair to become as involved as that of the Suez Canal and the waters of this river supply almost as cogent an argument for the retention of British supremacy in North East Africa as does the imperial highway.

By inference and indirect association, a residence of some years in Egypt cannot fail to impart a certain knowledge of and much interest in Sudanese affairs, and one's personal observations of the great changes for the better, which have been effected, are corroborated by the whole-hearted eulogy of such impartial observers as Roosevelt and others. The work of regeneration in the Sudan is still at its inception, though remarkable strides have already been made, and the system of Government which has gradually been evolved and which has resulted in an almost miraculous transformation in two decades, is a constructive work of which Sir Reginald Wingate may well be proud. The foundations so well and truly laid by him will in all probability carry a social structure of great political and economic significance within the lifetime of the present generation, and his name will be remembered in connection with the Sudan, in much the same way as that of Lord Cromer is associated with the march of progress in Egypt.

Nile control is the very essence of the relations between Egypt and the Sudan. Every drop of water

used throughout Egypt for irrigation either finds its source in the Sudan or flows through the country. Any political experiment south of Wadi Halfa must therefore be attended with the gravest risk.

Let us imagine a purely Egyptian Nile, controlled from Cairo. A recrudescence of the old evils, which inspired the spirit of revolt in the Mahdi and his followers, would lead undoubtedly to a similar outburst. On the former occasion the consequences were not serious from the point of view of the fellah, though the Mahdi's marauding bands at one time even reached the Fayoum. The conservancy works now projected and in course of erection and which are quite essential to Egypt's growing needs were at that time a remote contingency, but are now a concrete fact. When completed, the Sudanese will have the means of literally starving out the Egyptians at their command.

With the example of the difficulties created by a few rebel mountain tribes for a European power like Spain in the Atlas mountains, is Egypt satisfied that she could always preserve order among the turbulent negroid tribes of Equatorial Africa and the Arab peoples of the North which constitute the two natural divisions of the Sudanese? If so, Europe is by no means so optimistic. No one doubts that administrative standards are much higher than in pre-Occupation days and if Egypt were given a free hand in the Sudan she would govern creditably according to her own lights, but the antipathy on both sides is such that outbreaks would undoubtedly



occur, with the most disastrous consequences to Egypt owing to the incomparably greater opportunities of doing harm by interfering with the water supply.

Within a short space of time, the old tune with variations will be heard south of Wadi Halfa. This time it will be "the Sudan for the Sudanese." The Gordon college in Khartoum is fulfilling a very useful purpose in training clerical labour for the administration and it will in time provide men qualified to take the place of the Egyptian mamour and other Government officials. Demagogues—an inevitable by-product of such institutions—will also be produced in numbers. If the clamour is persistent enough and complete autonomy is conferred on the country, as happened further North, the lot of Egypt would depend on Khartoum to an extent which is not conceivable elsewhere in the world.

So much for the political aspect. No agreement setting forth the rights and obligations of both parties would be held sacred in case of conflict.

Would one or other of the contracting parties, in any circumstances and whatever the eventual political solution may be, let itself be swayed rather by equity and humanitarian principles than by expediency? With Egypt in control, the water-thirst, which is a natural concomitant of land-hunger in countries where agriculture depends exclusively on artificial irrigation, would be satisfied before the needs of the Sudan were considered and inversely an autonomous Sudan would always be filching water that

properly belonged to Egypt. When the programme is completed there will be enough for both, but until that moment, one or other or both will suffer from the withdrawal of British control, which alone can hold the scales impartially.

## VI

### THE PLAGUES AND FLESHPOTS OF EGYPT

PLAGUES and fleshpots have always been associated in the public mind with Egypt. Such an association of ideas is not unnatural, if we pause to consider Egyptian conditions.

The fleshpots are obvious. The gentle climate, the fertile soil and the richness of its produce are too well-known to be commented on and the mental deterioration which accompanies ease and over-indulgence everywhere is a marked feature of all classes in Egypt. The fleshpots connote in the minds of the pious the idea of the destruction of the soul and eminent prelates have been known to refer to Cairo as the grave of the soul. Graves too, in the literal sense, are an outstanding feature of Egypt.

The Pyramids and other mausoleums of the past, with which everyone is familiar, the catacombs of Alexandria, the "turbas" of the Mamelukes and the vast, but less pretentious "town without a market," where modern Cairo buries its dead, all prove the existence of a cult for funerary monuments, which has been handed down throughout the ages. On certain days all Cairo goes to the City of the Dead; a banquet is held at the family vault and the whole day, until late at night, is spent in the company of

the dead. Each family has its own little house, the tenants of which sleep under marble slabs. As this system is quite unknown among Mahomedans outside Egypt, it is clearly a survival of an ancient cult. In no other country in the world is such a plethora of graves, and such imposing and gruesome ones, to be found; it is indeed a vast cemetery.

Under its smiling exterior, it is too a land of tragedy. Truly the most brilliant sunshine casts the blackest shadows and the frequency of tragic happenings is often commented on by those who live in Egypt. Readers of the Bible may recall certain passages, which justify the idea held by many, that there is a curse on the land. It may be that the following passages have seriously influenced certain Englishmen, who were in favour of British withdrawal and others who opposed the project for the construction of a dam in the Sudan. It is from Chapter 19 Isaiah, verse 4 onwards:

“And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel Lord; and a fierce King shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts.

. . . . and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the river far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up . . . and everything sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away and be no more.”

Verse 14 says:—“The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.”

Chapters 29, verse 15 and 30, verse 13, of Ezekiel have been fulfilled to this day :

“ It shall be the basest of the kingdoms ; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations.”

. . . “ there shall be no more a Prince of the land of Egypt.” King Fuad is of course an Albanian.

Curse or no curse, the sense of the tragic has latterly become more marked and the atmosphere of the country seems to have completely changed in these last few years. Up to and during the war residents almost without exception grew to love the land of their adoption, but a most marked change in their attitude is observable since 1918. It is not only foreigners who have been affected, but quite a number of local *well-to-do families have recently left the country to take up their residence in Paris or elsewhere.* There was a certain buoyancy, not to say joyousness, about life in Egypt up to the beginning of the war, and a geniality about its inhabitants, which rendered it a very pleasant country to live in ; but latterly this feature has entirely disappeared to be replaced by a sense of the tragic and an impression of glowering hostility on every side. No wonder then that numbers of people who were well content with Egypt, as she used to be, and looked forward to spending their lives in the country, now spend their time devising ways and means of leaving it for good.

Underneath the smiling exterior, an undercurrent of the sombre has always existed, and especially in Cairo. This is largely a matter of health and not only foreigners but also the local element suffer from

a number of obscure ills. The city is indeed one vast desiccated cesspool. For a thousand years a swarming population has lived on this site without the most rudimentary idea of sanitation. Lord Kitchener's bold gesture in sweeping away every consideration of expense and expediency and insisting on the installation of a proper sewage system has done a great deal for the sanitation of the European quarter of the town, though the native quarter has hardly yet been touched. The Tanzim, or Department responsible for Municipal services, has hitherto kept the streets remarkably clean, but since the withdrawal of British control there has been a reversion to Oriental standards in this respect. Germ laden dust is allowed to accumulate and many have remarked on the deterioration of public health.

At the best of times, it was never a healthy city to live in. The Pashawat invariably visited Carlsbad, Vichy and other health resorts annually, to rid the system of accumulated poisons. The conditions in the congested native quarter were always deplorable, and it is noticeable how sickly and warped the people of the Jewish Ghetto of the Mouski appear; when, on the acquisition of wealth, people of this stock leave their insalubrious surroundings and live in healthy conditions in the Garden City or Gezira, with an annual visit to Europe, they produce fine physical specimens hardly recognizable as the same breed.

Alexandria is in general much more healthy for Europeans and so too are the provincial towns. But everywhere ailments and operations which are con-

sidered trifling at home are attended with considerable risk in this country, owing probably to some germ-laden quality in the air.

*Public Health.*

This really successful branch of British administration in Egypt has not generally received acknowledgment. But by the nature of things, lack of attention to its activities is a natural sequence of good preventive medicine.

Egypt was once constantly exposed to epidemics of plague, typhus, smallpox, relapsing fevers, besides such diseases as billharzia and ophthalmia, which, though less openly disastrous, do just as much harm by continually undermining public health. Plague has been well managed, and in spite of recurrent outbreaks, has been relegated to the status of a remote menace rather than an immediate danger. Typhus and relapsing fever have been energetically dealt with and in some years their almost complete disappearance has been effected. Smallpox has been stemmed by vaccination, carried out even among the Bedouins, who in spite of traditional stories to the contrary are not conspicuously immune from disease, but are common carriers of infection in Eastern countries. Cholera has not existed in epidemic form since 1902, when some 150,000 people died of it in the course of a few months. The protection of Egypt from this disease falls on the International Quarantine Board, but it is at all times possible that a leak may occur.

The remarkable public health work carried out by Sir John Rogers, Sir Horace Pinching and Mr. W. P. Graham has been a great boon to Egypt and the work has been supplemented in the zone of ophthalmia by the travelling eye hospitals created by Dr. W. A. McCallan with funds supplied by the generous endowments of the late Sir Ernest Cassel. Blindness is now not nearly so prevalent among the natives.

It is only lately that sufficient knowledge has been acquired to enable billharzia to be successfully treated and this scourge will have to be dealt with in the near future. Typhoid still stalks the unwary and is very serious in this country and the flesh is heir to a number of minor ills and indispositions here, which are due to the miasmas of the infected land.

The incidence of the more spectacular diseases has been checked, but the raising of the general standard of public health requires the serious attention of the Ministry, and it is to be hoped that the Authorities will recognize the necessity for European co-operation in these matters and will not insist on the complete "Egyptianization" of the Department.



## VII

### CAUSES OF ANTI-BRITISH FEELING

THE most pregnant phrase I have heard during many years residence in Egypt was used by a Mixed Court lawyer of considerable attainments. It was to the effect that on all occasions when dealing with British officials in the Egyptian Government, "*je me trouve en état d'infériorité.*" There has been undoubtedly a more or less generally adopted bland assumption of a quasi-papal infallibility on the part of British officialdom and a racial superiority of manner, which has galled to the quick not only the Egyptian, whose skin must have been toughened by æons of foreign domination, but also the large quota of foreign officials and professional men and their local Christian confrères who supply much of the driving force in the westernization of Egypt.

Sir Valentine Chirol in his "Egyptian Problem" touched very lightly but truly on the sore spot, when he questioned the advisability of the social segregation of Gezira. With very few enlightened exceptions, this segregation was absolute. Outside the Government offices there is no point of contact between the average British official and the rest of the community.

It has been objected often enough that the harim

system formed an impassible barrier, but this argument does not apply to the foreign and local Christian communities, who also consider themselves aggrieved by the taboo.

Social tone is given by the Residency, and as the superior staff there was exclusively diplomatic, though now the military element is well represented, they naturally confined themselves to diplomatic circles, and to the few advisers, whose position commanded their consideration. The mass of officialdom strives to maintain as close contact as possible with the Residency, and as most of the higher officials gradually gravitated to Gezira, they formed an ever closer clique, shutting themselves off from foreigners and especially local Christians by every possible means.

Egyptians of all classes were debarred from the Gezira Sporting Club, practically the only exception being a gentleman who played polo there, and the use of this magnificent playground, which was given as a gift for the purpose by Ismail in the best position of Cairo, was reserved almost exclusively for British officials and their families. There were several instances of owners of racing stables who were not admitted to membership, though the running of their horses made the highly successful race meetings possible. The great difficulty of drawing a dividing line is of course obvious, but more latitude might well have been allowed.

Many members of the wealthy local families had married into the very highest circles of various

European countries and indeed had become personæ gratæ at certain Courts. The aloofness with which they were treated by the most recently joined official of however obscure an origin was contrasted with the welcome they were afforded in foreign society abroad. The resultant ill-feeling led to estrangement of almost all the local non-Moslem communities and many of the foreigners from our cause, even of those whose security depended on a continuance of the occupation.

In this way it came to my knowledge that a Mixed Court lawyer, a foreigner and a recognized leader of the Bar, was engaged in active propaganda for Zaglul and his party. It should be added that shortly after the Alexandria disturbances, when he had seen with his own eyes numbers of his compatriots murdered by the fanatical mob, he changed his opinion rather abruptly, and told me that he and his friends thought the whole world would be better for British Occupation.

A certain segregation is, in the opinion of many of these officials, always necessary, and I have no doubt that the system works well among subject races. But many of the people offended in this way were brought up in European schools and nearly all educated according to Continental methods. The resultant ill-feeling is unimaginable except to the very few Englishmen who had a wide circle of acquaintances in Egyptian, foreign and local society. England's cause in Egypt suffered an irreparable loss with the death of Sir Alexander Baird, who was popular with all communities and all classes and whose advice, I have

reason to believe, was frequently in request at the Residency, as he attained a degree of social intimacy with the leaders of Egyptian and foreign society which no Englishman has enjoyed before or since. His influence worked, however, only through non-official channels, but among the officials of recent times I think I am right in saying there was only one individual who was sure of a welcome in any community. This was Alexander Granville Pasha, Head of the International Quarantine Board and Vice-President of the Alexandria Municipality. He was the only civilian on whom was conferred the title of Pasha, usually an adjunct of high military rank, and this at the apogee of the Nationalist agitation. His genial personality made friends for him wherever he went, without sacrificing in any degree the official firmness and impartiality which is so essential in a country like Egypt. This firmness was well illustrated by his refusal to allow the Crown Prince of Roumania to land at Alexandria without the usual Quarantine formalities, when he arrived from an infected port. In addition to the rare honour of the title of Pasha, Egyptians of their own free will made him a grant of a large sum of money, and on his departure did all they could to show their esteem and appreciation of the services he had rendered the country and of his unvarying sympathetic attitude towards all communities.

Of recent years the attitude of General Sir John Maxwell, Sir Alexander Baird and Granville Pasha in this respect has done much to enhance the prestige

and popularity, which we once enjoyed, but which, with their departure, we appear to have completely lost. Partisans of the system of segregation would do well to consider the results obtained by these three gentlemen, by an unfailing urbanity of manner towards all and sundry.

Lord Milner said somewhere that the Englishman is as adaptable in the art of government as he is clumsy and angular in society. A brittle and unbending attitude in policy and social relations appeared sound to many, while the machine was working smoothly, but when the snap came all the old antagonisms came to the surface and the breakage was complete. Again here it was the tactful handling of diplomatists only which could ensure the elimination of friction. A few more officials of the type of Sir Ronald Graham, the Hon. Mervyn Herbert, Mr. T. Loyd, and others of the diplomatic school, and a stricter combing out of the mass of minor officialdom would have made the glove more velvety, while sacrificing nothing in the way of firmness.

The truth is that the Egyptian, Moslem or non-Moslem, cannot but resent the assumption of racial superiority by the white man in his midst, but he can respect it when it is natural and unaffected. In Algiers, the French go to the other extreme and the officer will sip his *apéritif* with his African colleague ; with us such unbending is unknown.

Lord Cromer advocated the exhibition of reasonable and disciplined sympathy with the Egyptians. He might have included the local Christians and non-

Moslems generally. The lack of sympathy shown almost amounted to marked antipathy and was naturally resented by all. This can be the only explanation of the fact that the whole country, Moslem or non-Moslem, was against us to a man, when the outbreak came.

Another of the obscure causes which contributed in a minor, though no less real, manner to the general outburst of anti-British feeling was the severity with which certain questions were handled by the authorities towards the end of the War, and for a considerable time after the cessation of hostilities. Dance halls, cafés and music halls were closed down one after the other, and the military and civil authorities took on more and more the attributes of the licensing magistrates and the Public Censor at home. However laudable their object may have been, they would have been surprised to have heard the views of the foreign communities and even of the foreign diplomatic agents. One of the most important of the latter complained very bitterly to me of the inexcusable harshness with which his nationals were treated.

These methods lead to excellent results at home, but they were singularly unwise at that critical moment, and alienated many sympathies on which we could have otherwise counted. Unfortunately so complete was the lack of contact between British military and civil authorities in Egypt and even the diplomatic representatives of the Powers that it is doubtful whether they are to-day aware of the great indignation aroused by their arbitrary actions. Fric-

tion created by these methods left us finally with but one foreign community whose allegiance, at any rate within the boundaries of Egypt, never swerved. It was the Greek.

The Effendi's ideas of amusement follow the Continental model rather than our own. The main body of frequenters of the dancing and music halls was of this class with a smattering of the Levantine element. It was always the Effendi who was at the bottom of all political unrest. And the "désœuvrement" of these young men, deprived of the only forms of relaxation which they can understand, left them no alternative but to turn to political agitation as a killtime.

A much wider sympathy with the views of other nationalities is essential in a cosmopolitan community such as Egypt has to show. And if considerable authority is vested in individuals of nonconformist views, they are apt to forget that Continental standards differ widely from our own. They are weighed by measures which apply well enough in provincial towns at home, and the foreigner and Levantine is put in this way to what he considers quite arbitrary injustice.

It was in a word an ultra-Britannic attitude (to use the word as the French sometimes do) in our social relations and in questions of local government that estranged many of the foreign and nearly all the local non-Moslem communities from our cause.

Exception must be made here of the powerful Jewish community of Egypt. Their hold on finance,

commerce and industry is proportionately much stronger in Egypt than anywhere in Europe; and outside official circles they are probably the greatest civilizing factor in the country. Alone of the non-European communities of Egypt they are well abreast of the times and they are alone too in their appreciation of the arts and interest in things of the intellect. The other local communities would appear to have only a material outlook on life.

The Jews, who form the most influential non-European group in Egypt, were loyal to our cause almost without exception and for this we owe a debt of gratitude to them.

It is only lack of tact and undiplomatic handling of foreign susceptibilities that can explain the covert, though generally unexpressed, sympathy of resident Frenchmen and other Allies with the cause of the Nationalists. Other non-Moslem communities cannot but suffer from the withdrawal of British influence, yet they too were against us. Diplomacy, with all that the word entails, could alone have kept our hold on cosmopolitan Egypt. Military and colonial methods lost it.

### *The Labour Corps and Requisitions.*

Much stress has been laid on the dissatisfaction caused by the methods employed in raising the Labour Corps and in requisitioning for the needs of the army. As regards the former I am inclined to deny that the Egyptians had any cause for complaint. The Corps was efficiently run by officers who were all familiar



with local conditions. The fellah was better housed, better fed and better clothed than ever before. The death rate was high, but no higher than that of the Australians, for instance, who succumbed so easily to the effects of the chill night air of the desert at Mena. It is considered by some a hardship that they should have been impressed into the service, though no such opinion seems to have been expressed concerning the French native levies in Northern Africa. These latter were conscripted, whereas in Egypt the local authorities of each district were asked to provide a certain number of men, whom we hope were obtained by voluntary enlistment. In any case the conditions and rates of pay were such that men, who were discharged after six months' service, actually rioted when they could not get recruited a second time, as happened on at least one occasion ; this does not seem to show that the service was unpopular.

There was then no real grievance in the recruiting of the Labour Corps, but the same cannot be said for the methods employed in requisitioning. It was impossible to spare a sufficient number of able-bodied men to supervise the whole system and the actual dealings with the native population were left to minor Egyptian officials. Donkeys and camels, barley, tbn, etc., were seized wholesale at fixed and arbitrary prices by the overzealous local authorities, who strove to gain the approbation of their respective Ministries in this way. The worst feature was that in certain cases the money never reached the real owner, and it is a common joke of the countryside

that the omdehs and sheikhs of all the villages waxed fat.

While the military authorities were exceedingly generous and openhanded in all dealings of this nature with the native population, as can be seen by the complete absence of a general outcry, they were ill-advised in releasing the animals only at the prices obtaining in 1919 instead of those paid at the time of requisition. This was the only complaint which was generally voiced, Egyptians as a rule realizing that the military authorities had acted fairly throughout, though the local agents they employed had on occasion wielded their delegated powers in the usual Oriental way.

## VIII

### SAAD PASHA ZAGLUL

It is to Saad Pasha Zaglul that Egypt owes the sweets of independence. Faulty public services, lack of water for irrigation, corruption in all departments, a gradual impoverishment of the land, a revival of the almost forgotten oppression of the Pashas, in a word the rebirth of all the old evils—the aliquid amari of the removal of British influence—may already cast faint shadows on the land but will never dim the halo of the idol of Egypt.

Saad Pasha claims to be a fellah of the fellahin. He was born some 73 years ago at Biana in the Delta and studied at El Azhar. He was for many years a leading light of the native Bar and in 1893 he became Counsellor of the Native Court of Appeal. His first entrance into public life was in the character of a Nationalist follower of Arabi and without doubt the tradition has remained with him. Office came towards the end of the Cromer régime. He was appointed Minister of Public Instruction in 1905.

At that time he belonged to the moderate group of Nationalists, with whom Lord Cromer, a Liberal of the old school, often showed his sympathy. The high opinion he held of Zaglul Pasha may be gathered from the following extract from his farewell speech in Egypt:



SAAD PASHA ZAGLUL

[To face page 126]



"Unless I am much mistaken, a career of great public usefulness lies before the present Minister of Education, Saad Zaghlul Pasha. He possesses all the qualities to serve his country. He is honest; he is capable; he has the courage of his convictions. These are high qualifications. He should go far."

He has indeed gone much farther than Cromer could ever have dreamt. The Arabi revolt was largely anti-Turkish, and Saad Pasha's political views have shown the same bias throughout his career. For many years he played a leading rôle in the "Hasb el Oum," or popular party, whose main platform was the suppression of the influence of the Pashas; but as early as 1905 he threw in his lot with the "Hasb el Watan," or National party. Nevertheless he has always been regarded as a champion of the purely Egyptian ideal.

With his rise to power the old bias reasserted itself. The Adly party, while equally fervent Nationalists, are looked on as the stronghold of the Turks. Adly Pasha Yeghen is the "doyen" of the aristocracy of Egypt. The name Yeghen implies connection with the ruling family. With the growing conviction of a coming change in the status of Egypt, these two outbid each other for popular favour. The less balanced promises of Saad Pasha, particularly with reference to the Sudan, while they served his purpose, cannot but create difficulties for him, and the Sudan negotiations will undoubtedly increase them.

He is the new Arabi that the Egyptians have been expecting to free them from foreign bondage, but in

addition he is a statesman of experience and judgment, and he realizes that Egypt has not yet produced the type of man capable of governing. He therefore effected a partial reconciliation with the less intransigent elements of the Turkish clique, and many of the offices in the new Government are filled from the Turkish aristocracy. Mohamed Said, Ahmed Ziwer and Mazloun Pashas are examples of the public spirited and high minded men who belong racially, though not politically, to the Adly clique, but who realized that in the present temper of the nation they would have to throw in their lot with Zaglul if they wished to remain in office to guide Egypt's first faltering steps.

On the surface relations between Saad Pasha and the Palace are cordial enough, though the Turkish and Albanian element must know that he stands for the removal of their influence almost as much as for that of Europe. He seems bent on reconciling the influential Turco-Egyptians, but may have to yield to the pressure which his more extreme and less experienced followers cannot fail to exert. As the whole of the ruling and governing caste is Turkish, it will be impossible to avoid recruiting from them for many years to come. Nevertheless, antagonism between the Egyptian and Turkish elements, however hidden, will not cease to exist.

Saad Pasha's claim to be a fellah of the fellahin is belied by his personal appearance. But ethnological anomalies are often found in Egypt. For instance, round about Damietta and Rosetta fair-

haired and blue-eyed types are occasionally seen; they are attributed by some to the presence of British men-of-war in Egyptian waters at the time of the battle of the Nile and to the French armies of Napoleon.

Saad Pasha's high cheek bones and upward slanting narrow eyes denote some strain of Turanian ancestry, perhaps an accident of the Mongol invasion of the twelfth century. His colouring is essentially Egyptian, though this may be due to climatic reasons. Pure bred Turks in Egypt are often of Egyptian colouring, while preserving all the characteristics of their Tartar or Aryan ancestry. He has considerable personality and is harder in type than the average Egyptian. He does not lay himself out to be affable, and does not hesitate to express opinions in direct opposition to those held by whomever he may be addressing. In these particulars, indeed, he is very un-Egyptian. He is of great height and spare of frame; more angular than the usual Egyptian type, which is all round contours. He married the daughter of Mustafa Pasha Fahmi, who brought him a considerable fortune, and plays among Egyptian women the same rôle as does her husband among the men.

He showed personal courage by his unconcern on the occasion of the recent attempt on his life. The story goes that he was leaning out of the window of his carriage at the station, addressing the crowd which never fails to accompany his comings and goings, and was expressing his pride at the confidence the nation put in him, adding, "I pray God he will curb any undue exultation I, as a human being, cannot but



feel on being acclaimed like this," when at that very moment his misguided assailant shot him in the shoulder. He showed his courage too by repeatedly braving exile, which might easily have proved fatal to a man of his age and indifferent health.

He is a stubborn fighter, but not a diplomatist. On his visit to London in 1920 he antagonised all the officials with whom he came in contact. His own followers left him one by one and returned to Egypt, on some plausible excuse of ill-health. They admit he is impossible to work with. On the occasion of his first request to be allowed to proceed to London to lay Egypt's case before the British people, Sir Reginald Wingate is reputed to have counselled acquiescence, but it was vetoed by the Foreign Office. Under Allenby, in the absence of an official visit to the Residency, he was ignored, and there was no contact between the leader of the Egyptian nation and our authorities until he became in reality the acknowledged head of the government of independent Egypt. A less unbending attitude might have made him more tractable.

He talks French well, and since his accession to power has made considerable efforts to learn English, to facilitate conversations with British Authorities. Among his personal foibles may be mentioned a love of the green cloth and a fondness for the table, and he showed himself a good trencherman on his frequent visits to the Mitre at Hampton Court, where he much admired the home grown lamb. He can on occasion unbend and be even affable among friends.

Saad Pasha Zaglul is the idol of the Egyptian nation. Few men in history can ever have had such a reception from their countrymen as was afforded him on the occasion of his return from exile in Malta. Certainly half the population of Cairo lined the streets to do him honour. Processions paraded for months on end with the cry of "Yehya el rais el mahbub"—"Long live our beloved leader"—with his house as their objective. It is known to-day as the "Beit el Watan"—the House of the Nation. His determination and singleness of purpose compel our admiration, but his intractability will be the main obstacle for the success of the Sudan negotiations. Among his own people he is looked on as the symbol of "Masr lil Masryin"—Egypt for the Egyptians, to the exclusion of all foreign influence, be it European or Turkish—and, as such, as an epitome of the spirit of modern Egypt.

## IX

### THE PEOPLES OF EGYPT

A FULL comprehension of the Egyptian problem is impossible without an intimate and first hand acquaintance of its constituent parts. While without doubt Lord Cromer and Lord Milner have written with the best possible authority on the administration of Egypt, being themselves the administrators, no work has ever been published in English on Egyptian affairs by any author who had lived and worked in intimate non-official connection with the various communities which form the nation.

A true insight into character can only be acquired by those familiar with the many tongues of the Near East. Lord Cromer knew a little Turkish, but had no knowledge of Arabic, a considerable handicap in formulating opinions on the inhabitants. Sir Valentine Chirol gathered an immense amount of accurate information during his short stays in Egypt and it would be hard indeed to get nearer the truth than he did. Mr. Cameron's official position permitted only historical exposition of fact, while precluding controversial comment, though he was perhaps better fitted to express opinions on all questions, save administrative ones, than any of the other authors mentioned, as he was intimately acquainted with





KING LUAD

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the languages and customs of the various communities.

It is this gap that the writer hopes in some measure to fill from the small store of first hand information gathered during ten years' experience of official and commercial life in Egypt.

### *The Palace.*

Of a total population of some fourteen millions, thirteen are Mahomedans. They must, therefore, have pride of place.

The highest stratum of Moslem society in Egypt is almost exclusively Turkish and Albanian. Even with the arrival of a true Egyptian in the person of Saad Pasha to the first office in the land, it must not be imagined that Egypt has rid herself of the Turk. Mahomed Ali left an imprint on the country which will never fade until a successful Arabi appears.

King Fuad, as a nominee of England, can never be popular among Egyptians, who are further prejudiced by his Italian upbringing and sympathies. But he has behaved with admirable circumspection since he was put on the throne and has succeeded in gaining, if not the sympathy, at least the toleration of even the most subversive elements among his turbulent subjects.

The Queen belongs to the most European of the first Moslem families. She is a daughter of Sabri Pasha, who is a lineal descendant of Sherif Pasha el Fransawi (the Frenchman), so this is not to be wondered at. Her brother Sherif is a type of gentleman

which, while still in a minority, augurs well for the future of Egypt.

While on the subject of the family of Mahomed Ali, it is apposite to give a few details on Abbas Hilmi, the ex-Khedive, who is still the nominal head of the family and is a typical instance of the Oriental ruler.

Whenever anything untoward occurs in Egypt, the hand of Abbas Hilmi is at once suspected. He is reputed to have an astounding capacity for tortuous intrigue, which is much exaggerated, but which was nevertheless one of the great difficulties Lord Cromer had to contend with during his 25 years of work in Egypt.

He is an example of the Turkish clique, who have bled Egypt for the last hundred years. In appearance he is portly; but of most pleasant address, very much the Grand Seigneur and extremely considerate of people he liked; quite ruthless in his dislikes.

The tale of the appointment of Captain Potts to the command of the Khedivial yacht, the "Mahroussa," well illustrates the methods of the Oriental despot and yet shows the kindly side of Abbas' nature. He was travelling down the Red Sea in a coastguard steamer, which Captain Potts commanded at the time. Hearing the strains of "Stop your tickling, Jock" issuing from the Captain's cabin, he asked to be allowed to come and listen to the gramophone. As he often asked for it to be played, Captain Potts sent the record with his compliments to Ras el Tin Palace on his return to Alexandria and was shortly after gazetted to the command of the Khedi-

vial Yacht. It is true that Abbas could have made no better choice; Captain Potts too, who had every occasion to see the intimate side of the Khedive, always spoke very highly of him and was especially warm in praise of the consideration shown by Abbas Hilmi to his English staff at the beginning of the War with Turkey, but for which they might have remained prisoners at Constantinople for the duration of hostilities.

The entry of the Turks into the War as Allies of the Central Powers found Abbas at his magnificent Palace at Tchibukli on the Bosphorus. On Lord Cromer's advice, it was decided in London that he should not be allowed to return to Egypt.

It is well known that Abbas continually applied at home to be rid of this unwelcome Thomas à Beckett and that he finally had his way. But Cromer on leaving Egypt is reputed to have promised Abbas to do as much for him one day. Thus were accounts squared.

With the cessation of hostilities the old itch for intrigue reasserted itself. The Khedive no doubt hoped that there would be a popular demand for his return, when the country was granted its independence.

I had been asked to lunch with him one day after the War at Tchibukli, but at arrival at the Khedivah Mother's Palace at Bebek found the launch which was to take us sunk at its moorings and half the windows of the Palace broken by an explosion which occurred on the previous day. He attributed this



to a bomb placed by his enemies among the coal, and the fact that the launch had been inspected and passed A1 by Lloyds only a few days previously lent some colour to the theory.

During lunch he explained to me that Egypt would never be tranquil until his return. There is something to be said for this point of view, because he was undoubtedly very popular among the masses. He went on to say that if duty called him, he would even accept the throne of Mesopotamia, which shows how the loss of ruling power rankles in his breast.

Only a year ago a battalion of troops were marching through Alexandria to embark at the port. Everywhere was heard "The English are going and Abbas rahirga bad [khamastashar yom (Abbas is returning in fifteen days' time)." The children of Egypt are credible in the extreme. In this case the wish was no doubt father to the thought, but its general acceptance is significant.

The recent attempt on the life of Zaglul Pasha has reawakened all the old suspicions and there are many in the Palace entourage and in Government circles who wrongly attribute all such untoward occurrences to agents of the ex-Khedive.

This diversion must be excused as Abbas is a typical example of the Oriental ruler and combines most of the characteristics of the Khedivial family. Also he had and has kept a place in the hearts of his subjects, to which King Fuad with his foreign upbringing and association can never aspire.

The life of the present King is peculiarly detached,

not to say confined to the four walls of his Palace. There appears to be no contact between him and the people and very little even with the Government.

Attached more or less to the Court are a number of princelings of the family of Mohamed Ali. They are all pensioned off from the Civil List, few receiving less than £100 a month. There are some undesirable elements among them and types of physical coarseness and intellectual slimness are to be found. There are also a number of idle and pleasure-loving young men, who have many of the graces of the boulevard dandy and are always in entanglements and difficulties, some of which quite recently have had a tragic ending. Such for instance are the marriage and divorce of Prince Jemal el Din and the repudiation by the Royal Family of Prince Salim.

Even the present King was shot at in his younger days and badly wounded by his brother-in-law. His assailant is, I believe, still detained in a hospital for the mentally defective in England. This occurred at the Mohamed Ali Club, which was then in the Sharia Manakh. One of the witnesses in the case was a sergeant-major who had seized the Prince as he was leaving the Club. It is said that he had been carefully primed to show due respect to the reigning family in giving evidence. But such is the colossal ignorance of the average Tommy and so inveterate his habit of generalizing, that he actually said, "Hearing some shots, I ran across the street to see what I could do and caught the nigger coming down the steps with a smoking pistol in 'is 'and."

It cannot be gainsaid that there are some unsatisfactory characters among the lesser members of the Khedivial family, and this is the more to be regretted for the sake of a number of exemplary gentlemen among them.

The best have many admirable qualities and of these should be mentioned the Princes Omar Tossoun and his brother Jemil, Prince Mohamed Ali and Prince Kemal el Din. If the Royal family show in future the characteristics of these, much good will accrue to Egypt. If not, there is no indigenous element to take their place, and the only solution will be a republican form of government.

One of the conditions laid down by King Fuad before his acceptance of the throne was that the old Turkish rule of succession of the eldest male member of the ruling family, which had already been waived in Ismail's days as a result of a heavy payment to the Porte, should be definitely abrogated and the British Government guaranteed his family succession by primogeniture. So we are committed to support the succession of Prince Farukh and this may one day give rise to complications.

### *The Turkish Aristocracy.*

Almost the first act of the Egyptian Government after the abolition of the Protectorate was to appoint Ministers to all the Powers and Consuls to important towns. They have chosen well, but with few exceptions the new appointments were filled from the old Turkish ruling caste.

The Egyptian masses have been vouchsafed a glimpse of the meaning of the word nationality. When they see a little clearer, they will doubtless appreciate that conditions have not changed.

In the East generally religion implies nationality. Thus a stranger met in the streets of Constantinople, if asked what he is, will not reply Arab, or Turk or Greek, but Moslem or Orthodox. In this way it has come about that the Egyptian Turk's claim to Egyptian nationality has not often been openly questioned. But they still form a quite distinct community, marrying almost exclusively among themselves, speaking Turkish when together and never completely breaking their allegiance to or discarding their sympathies with Constantinople.

Even to-day, under Zaglul, all political power lies in their hands. The only serious attempt to break up this camarilla was made by Arabi. In the first days of Zaglul's rise to power, much stress was laid on the approaching liberation of Egypt not only from British but also from Turkish domination. But King Fuad is still there however unpopular he may be. The President of the Senate and many of the Ministers are drawn from the old Turkish ruling caste, many of whom do not even read and write Arabic correctly.

It would be interesting to examine the family tree of Zaglul Pasha. He claims to be a pure-blooded Egyptian. But the narrow and slanting eyes and the high cheekbones and certain un-Egyptian traits in his character denote a strain of Tartar, Circassian

or Turkish infusion. Only in colouring is he typically Egyptian, but this may be purely climatic and is often found among the Turks of Egypt.

The Turk alone among the peoples of Egypt has the habit and air of command, so in spite of the paucity of their numbers they have been chosen by successive Agents and Consuls-General for all positions of authority. He is the natural gentleman of the Near East, and even in these enlightened days an educated Syrian or Armenian will unconsciously suffer from an inferiority complex in his presence, and may even feel an atavistic urge to cross his hands humbly on his stomach in the presence of a Pasha.

The days have gone when the Turk was looked on as an unavoidable encumbrance, and when his oppression was regarded by the fellah as a law of nature. He is now distinguished rather for balance and moderation in political outlook and for all his faults is the best element among Egyptians of education to-day.

### *The Fellah.*

At the other end of the scale also many natural virtues and much that is lovable is to be found. The fellah in his fields is probably without exception the hardest working agriculturalist in the world. He is out with the dawn and leaves off at sundown. His patience and endurance are stupendous. For hours on end he can be seen toiling at his "shadouf," a primitive arrangement of a bucket on a pole, counter-balanced by a stone at the other end, by means of which he raises water to the required level. The

Saidi poles his clumsy "ghiassa" for hundreds of miles along the river, when the wind fails, for hours a day in the broiling sun. An hour of this labour would entail death by sunstroke for any European. Shipping men affirm that nowhere in the world is the heavy work of coaling done with such expedition as at Port Said.

Coupled with this superhuman endurance, an unflinching cheerfulness is to be found. They are very charitable towards each other and friendly and helpful to foreigners. Unfortunately in recent times the evil influence of the agitator has nullified this latter quality.

It is in the middle and professional classes that we find the mass of undesirables who are doing all they can to eradicate European influence, and all the good it has so manifestly done to the country. The towns are naturally the breeding place of this spawn. Mr. D. A. Cameron, late H.M. Consul-General at Alexandria, with his usual exceptional pithiness, once expressed the opinion to me that half the trouble was due to the overcrowding of the towns. Formerly, he said, Nature attended to this and swept away the superfluous elements by disease. We have now interfered with the course of nature and forestalled any possibility of the outbreak of epidemics, which were a feature of the past. The terrible congestion of the Mouski and its attendant evils are in his opinion the direct result of our sanitary measures; so they are in practice a by no means unmixed blessing.

Without taking too seriously this oracular assertion,

there was always a grain of truth in his whimsical conceits. The keeping alive by artificial means of this surplus population has indeed resulted in a mass of vagabondage undreamt of in European towns. They were ever ready for trouble and responded instantly to the leaven of the agitator. In similar circumstances everywhere, this would always be the first manifestation of mass-psychology. But they were joined immediately by what is known among us as the bourgeoisie, who have repeatedly shown their complete lack of appreciation of the benefits European methods have conferred on Egypt and their desire to revert to Asiatic standards. In fact they formed the "corpus vile" of the revolt, the ruffians joining in the processions, not so much from conviction as on the chance, which was often realized, of a little lucrative looting.

In Europe the stable element is the bourgeoisie, ranging from the small shopkeeper through the professional classes to the landed proprietor. But in Egypt stability is to be found among the fellahin and the upper classes only. The former has been unfortunately debauched by the agitator and probably looks on the question from the point of view of religion first and last, and there is no doubt that among the latter is a growing sense of insecurity and perhaps even unspoken regret at the undermining of their position by the withdrawal of British influence.

All the characteristics of the Egyptian can be seen at a glance in the wooden statue in the Cairo Museum, which is generally known as the "Sheikh el beled"

—the headman of the village. The hand whose cunning embodied the spirit of the fellah of Joseph's times in this piece of wood has left us a norm by which Egypt and the Egyptians can be measured equally well to-day.

As he was four thousand years ago, the fellah who forms 90 per cent. of the population is to-day of the earth earthy. He lives on, by and in earth. His house is a little conical mud hut. All day long he delves the earth, sometimes with a crude spade, with which he shovels the earth on to his feet, not away from him ; but as often as not with his bare hands and as he forms his little dykes and canals for leading the precious water round his land, the observant will often notice a caressing gesture, almost a pat, as bestowed on an old, old friend. His only clothes are a strip of blue cloth. For the rest his colour scheme is the green of the growing crops, the unchanging blue of the sky and the brown earth, and in the mass, he also is of an earthy brown, though the fair type is sometimes found at Damietta and the coal black at Assouan. Very close to earth too is his conversation, which revolves round earth, water and the functions of the body. He is of cheerful habit and witty, though invariably gross. Sometimes subtle, as shown by an expression used to reprove hastiness—"mustagil eh, ya ibn sabat usher"—"what are you in a hurry about, you son of seven months ?"

His wants are incredibly few and all supplied from his immediate surroundings. He has a little patch of durra or maize from which he draws the nice brown



bread which forms his staple diet. Once a month a communal "fantasia" (rejoicing) or "eid" (festival) will lead to the slaughtering of a sheep, on which rare occasion he grossly overfeeds. Thick black coffee is his only stimulant. He lives much closer to nature than is ever attained by the European.

A little group of palms provide him with dates to eat, fibre for his homely mats, fronds for his bed and for making baskets, their stalks for crating his market produce—in a word he beats the Chicago packer who boasted that he used all the pig bar the squeak, for every part of the palm is utilized. A good palm tree is worth between £1 and £2 a year to its possessor, and it is a common thing to find a simple fellah owning some thousands of them.

Many of the fellahs are very rich. A spirited white donkey is the sign by which you may know them. If the animal is nicely shaved, with a triangular pattern across his quarters, you may be sure that the rider is a man of consequence. An old gentleman, met on a country road on a "rahwan" or ambling donkey, taking vegetables to the neighbouring market town, as likely as not has a son at Oxford, enjoying all the prestige of an Oriental nabob.

The animation of the Egyptian countryside forms a strong contrast to European conditions. In these populous fields there is no dullness. Dotted around every few yards, groups of fellahs work cheerfully together. Nowhere do you find loneliness and empty spaces, which are so characteristic of farm life at home.

The fellah's animals live with him and besides working for him provide him with milk and fuel, and even with materials for building additions to his little home, and on occasion too with the plastic matter for a tasteful arabesque to relieve the drab monotony of his mud hut. This intimacy leads to a friendliness with the animal kingdom which is unknown among us. So one sees a string of fierce-looking "gamus" (buffalo), with a donkey and a camel or so, led by a naked child of three, generally sprawling on the back of one of them. So, too, a race horse is taken through the streets of Cairo, thronged with motors, steamrollers and other disturbing elements, by a little stable urchin riding bare backed with a rope round the horse's nose. Much preliminary soothing and calming is needed before any European can get on the same horse's back in an open field.

As a general rule, he is very good to his animals, but is apt to exploit them. He knows to a nicety how much they can live on in their unproductive seasons. In Egypt such a thing as open grazing on the valuable land is unknown. Each animal is tethered to a peg and the peg is moved just the number of feet every day which will give him the barely sufficient radius for his daily needs; and very gaunt and hungry they look too. On his trips to the neighbouring town he will pile up in an astonishing way on a "carro" or cart, made by four or five planks, twelve foot long, poised on a couple of wheels and drawn by a diminutive donkey. Where perhaps four Europeans might dispose themselves with careful

arrangement, fifteen and twenty sit with comfort. And the five-seater Ford carries rarely less than five times that number, festooned round the running-boards, bonnet, and the wings like bunches of bananas. On such occasions an extraordinary recklessness is shown and appalling accidents occur. Once fourteen people were killed on a Ford car, which dashed across a level crossing in front of a train, though the country at that spot was quite flat and there was nothing to obstruct the view for five miles in every direction.

One very strong characteristic of the fellah is his objection to have anything to do with the law or the police. In Europe generally speaking and very markedly in England, the public help the police. When a very notable political murder took place in London, the public took a great part in the chase of the redhanded murderers and probably were the cause of their capture. But in Egypt no fellah would dream of assisting the police in similar circumstances. He will hurry away from the scene of the crime and will subsequently deny that he heard or saw anything. This is not entirely due to cowardice but mainly to fear of the police and of the parquet methods of conducting an enquiry. A fellah who acknowledged he was a witness to a crime would be at once imprisoned, subjected to a browbeating enquiry and would be lucky if he did not eventually get involved in the accusation of some crime or other. Village vendettas are a constant feature of the countryside, and the incidence of crime due to them and to banditry is the greatest problem that the Public Security

Department has to face. Obscure connection with some such happening may be traced to him, and in any case he would be subsequently exposed to the revenge of the perpetrators of the crime or their relations. Even the aggrieved in such cases prefer to settle accounts in their own devious ways, rather than apply to the police for redress.

Cotton has been the open sesame to the larger life for the fellah of Egypt. In good seasons it brings him tremendous wealth. The best cotton land has changed hands at £800 an acre and I have even heard of a £1000 and more. In normal times with cotton at steady prices £200 will buy really good land and £400 would be the limit for the best. When compared with the value of the best agricultural land in Europe, it is easily seen what a source of wealth cotton has been to the country.

In exceptional seasons, as for instance in 1920 when cotton reached 200 dollars the cantar, the usual price being round about thirty, the fellah may buy a gold trinket for his wife and even erect another little mud hut beside his own to contain a Ford car, but otherwise alters not a jot or tittle of his familiar life. Surplus goes invariably into the acquisition of more land and in this way immense fortunes have been made by shrewd and quite illiterate fellahin. The next step is to acquire an "esbeh" or estate containing a village. A good instance is that of Mohamed Badraoui Ashur Pasha, who worked his way up continually acquiring fresh estates and is now reputed to have an annual income of £300,000

a year. He is still an unaffected fellah of kindly and cheerful disposition. Discussing this old gentleman with a highly educated Egyptian one day, the latter commented on the strange ways of providence in storing up happiness for unborn generations. He took it for granted that great wealth unquestionably entailed happiness and this material point of view is held by all classes of Egyptians.

It is, on the contrary, the progeny of those who have quickly acquired fortunes that often, but not always, comes to grief. The boys are sent to France or Germany with unlimited pocket money and without family standards other than those of their native fields to check them. The unfortunate Ali Bey Fahmi was a typical instance. With an immense fortune at his disposal, he built a palace in Gezira, kept a fleet of Rolls Royces and other cars, and returned from Europe with a "*bonne amie*," whom he subsequently married and by whom he was shot at the Savoy Hotel in London.

A similar lack of balance and proportion is occasionally evinced by members even of the Mohamed Ali family, and several of the younger princelings have recently done much to tarnish the good name of Young Egypt. But wildness exists everywhere, though perhaps not so conspicuously in Europe, where a line is generally drawn somewhere. The sense of family tradition exists however just as much among the nucleus of the best families in Egypt as with us and many of the younger generation show signs of considerable promise.

The fellah is as a rule monogamous but, in the towns more especially, the frequency and facility of divorce are a cloak for unbridled licence. The Harim system has undoubtedly debased the status of women. The birth of a girl is considered a natural and rather regrettable accident, but the advent of a boy is greeted with family rejoicing and his circumcision is made the occasion of an imposing fantasia. Even the poorest hire at least one motor car and several carriages, bedecked with flowers and preceded by a band. Each vehicle contains a dozen or so of the family and as many friends as can find a foothold. The centre of attraction sits among a swarm of his little brothers and sisters, tricked out in all the gaudy finery that his doting family can provide and surmounted with an embroidered tarbush. The music on these occasions is even more cheerful and inspiring than at weddings. Otherwise the only difference the untutored eye can perceive in the two processions is the imposing display of mattresses and household utensils which advertise the affluence of the bride and bridegroom in wedding ceremonies. It is the same the world over, and only varies in degree, as witness the displays of wedding presents which are customary with us.

There is a very close bond between the Mahomedan father and his son and they combine to keep the womenfolk of the household in their place. Thus I once heard of a little monster of two, whose father boasted that he had reported the breaking of a plate by his mother, which led to the latter incurring a beating and the child being highly commended for

his zeal. The very language makes one realize the hardships of native women in the exercise of their household duties. There are no such words as "please" and "thank you," except terms created for and by foreigners. "Min fadlak" (of your pleasure), "kattar khairak" (thank you) and "merci" are commonly used by Europeans and by natives dealing with them, but very rarely indeed among themselves. In native households all requests take the form of a command.

It is too lightly assumed that the Harim system results in all cases in the utter debasement and subjection of the weaker sex. But in the intimacy of the Oriental home, woman is sometimes just as much mistress of the house as in the West and the termagant and the shrew are just as frequently met. A charming Oriental tale, the moral of which would apply the world over, well illustrates this point. It is one of the many current concerning Nasr el Din Khoja, the legendary wit of Turkey.

The Khoja was ever a favourite of the Sultan Bayazid and on one occasion his dejected mien was so pronounced that his royal patron inquired if he could do anything to help him. Nasr el Din replied, "Oh Commander of the Faithful, my wants are many and my means are few. I am not here to beg, but a Firman signed and sealed by your Majesty, authorising me to collect a mejidieh (dollar) from every man in the Ottoman dominions who is afraid of his wife, would do much to retrieve my ruined fortunes." The document was completed by the Grand Vizir and

handed to Nasr el Din, who left the presence and was no more seen for six months.

One day the Sultan saw an imposing cavalcade, escorted by a richly mounted and caparisoned troop of men-at-arms, approaching the Palace with a closed barouche bringing up the rear. The most splendid figure of them all descended at the Palace Gate and asked audience of the Sultan. It was Nasr el Din, clothed in precious Persian silks and ablaze with jewels.

With much lifting of the dust to his breast and to his forehead, Nasr el Din approached the Presence and stood humbly with downcast eyes and with hands well withdrawn within his sleeves and crossed on his stomach awaiting his master's pleasure.

"Ma' sh' Allah (what wonderful things God wills)," said the Sultan, "thy present state is indeed different to that of my well remembered friend of old. Whence this prosperity?"

"I have only thee to thank, oh Fountain of all good. I have collected a dollar from nearly every married man in thy Dominions, and as the smallest token of my gratitude have brought with me in that closed barouche the fairest Circassian slave ever seen in the market at Stamboul."

"Nothing could give me greater pleasure, Khoja," said the Sultan. "I will go at once and ask the Sultana to admit her to the Harem."

"Dollar please," said Nasr el Din.

Surprise has been expressed that the staunchest supporters of the Harim system are the women



themselves, but to me it seems easily understandable that centuries of seclusion and consequent atrophy of the reasoning faculties would make them incapable of envisaging any change. Rigid adherence to the principle is of course impossible in the countryside, where the women do their share of the work in the fields and are necessarily herded in close proximity to their neighbours in the villages. But as soon as an Egyptian acquires a certain social status, his dignity demands an absolute segregation of his women-folk. The system is therefore more closely applied in the towns and particularly in the middle classes; the uppermost classes are beginning to emancipate themselves. Nevertheless ladies returning from Europe in the latest Parisian frocks discard them and don the "habara" before disembarking at Alexandria and with it voluntarily renounce all the freedom they enjoy away from home.

Every nation and every religion must settle these questions for themselves. The fellah is hardly affected but the townsmen and the upper classes have been set an example by the Turks, whose leaders have at long last realized that the seclusion of women cannot but have a deadening effect on the minds of the young. Emancipation may quicken the intellectual life of the family and thus solve the riddle of Eastern backwardness as compared with the West.

### *The Official Classes.*

In describing the characteristics, the qualities and defects of a people, it is difficult to avoid generalities,





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and criticisms which experience of Egypt cannot but suggest to the open-minded would appear unmannerly and unfair in the case of the many notable exceptions.

Thus in Adly Pasha Yeghen we have an example of the true aristocrat of the Near East. His loyalty and incorruptibility are beyond question. He is, too, very much the "grand seigneur" and is rightly regarded as the doyen of the aristocracy. Ahmed Pasha Mazloun is another instance and coupled with the above qualities he is a first rate man of business. In fact his office is run as efficiently and is kept as tidy as any office run by Europeans in Egypt. Ziwer Pasha is an urbane man of the world and is persona grata in diplomatic circles. Rushdi Pasha is a statesman of great experience and judgement and has a rare turn of wit. On one occasion a distinguished stranger in Cairo asked Rushdi Pasha, who was sitting among a number of ex-Ministers who had lost their portfolios on the advent of Zaglul Pasha to power, whether it was polite and proper to address a Pasha as "Excellency." Rushdi replied "we are all Exes here."

Mahomed Pasha Mahmoud, at one time Mudir of Behera, made many friends at Oxford and is a typical example of the Egyptian gentleman. Seif el Nasr, ex-Mudir of Fayoum, once said he spoke and thought like an Englishman and was in every respect like one, but he did not wear a bowler hat, disliked marmalade and did not sing in his bath. He was a charming host and very popular among the English. Both these two were efficient in their duties and very

well disposed towards us. But instead of encouraging it, I am afraid we have lost some at least of their sympathy.

Seifullah Yousri Pasha, now Minister at Washington, has been a frequent and appreciated guest in many of the great houses at home. His prowess on the polo field has made him popular in sporting circles everywhere. Hassanein Bey, who is also attached to the Legation at Washington, enjoyed a very wide circle of friends among the British in Egypt and his intrepid explorations in the Sahara have made him famous in both hemispheres. His accounts of his wanderings are written with an admirable modesty and restraint and the personal equation is suppressed in a manner which many other explorers would do well to imitate.

Shahin, who did all he could to protect British lives and property during the revolts and who has been much criticized by the extremists in consequence, is a type of officer and gentleman of whom any country might be proud.

These are but isolated instances of a small but ever growing coterie in Egypt who are up to the best European standards in every way, and if my criticisms of Egyptians should ever appear harsh to them, I would ask them to believe that no one realizes better than myself their great qualities. But they are a minute leaven only and while in them we have types who are quite capable of running the Government machine, the low standards of the mass of officialdom are bound to neutralize their best efforts. British

methods are to be congratulated on having produced types such as these. Education at home in the case of some of them and contact with British officials in all cases during their political and departmental life cannot but have influenced their outlook and made them stand out in such sharp contrast to their fellows. Having formed the nucleus, the mistake was in not waiting till it had grown, and these very people, who are recognized as exceptions by everyone, are suspect to the agitator by reason of their European associations and many of them therefore will not have much say in guiding the policies of Egypt.

But if the officials of the next generation are modelled on this type, Egypt can look forward to the future with confidence.

The worst fault of the average Egyptian official is his susceptibility to pressure and his ruthlessness in applying it when in power. Thus at every trial of representative institutions in Egypt, the Delegates have been unanimously for the Government and there has been no opposition. On occasion there have been indecent scrambles to occupy the Government benches and considerations of space alone have led to the occupation of the seats of the opposition.

It is necessary to bring out clearly what this pressure is and how it is applied, as no Englishman who has not lived intimately among the peoples of the Near East can have any idea of its severity. A judge is pestered by the friends and relatives of the criminal he is to try, and even if he is not approached directly, pressure is brought to bear on his wife, his children

and his friends. The police officer has to be careful how he incurs the resentment of the great man, whose sycophant he has prosecuted, as it might mean the loss of his job. Nobody in England realizes how power is used and abused in the East. The present Government, a good one in many ways, but none the less Oriental, has dismissed from their posts hundreds of omdehs and village sheikhs, who were not their active supporters. There is no such thing as impartiality or fairplay. If you have power, you use it for yourself and your friends and abuse it ruthlessly against your enemies. Public opinion expects nothing else and no one objects. Again "everyone who is not for me, is against me"—there is no such thing as neutrality.

Nepotism is practised to an extent and with an undisguised cynicism unheard of at home. The moral tone has been somewhat raised by the high standards set by British civilians, and corruption is not so openly prevalent, as it is officially condemned, though official censure finds little echo in public opinion, as such practice is apt to be condoned owing to the general recognition of this national failing.

It was commonly acknowledged, even by our most implacable enemies, that British officials were quite free of this taint and the best proof of this statement lies in the fact that they were never approached. They were also completely insusceptible to pressure, which justified Lord Cromer's policy of supporting Advisers even against Ministers, and enabled them to observe a detached and impartial attitude on all

occasions. They were, too, free from this common Egyptian failing in minor matters, not through any special virtue of their own, though we know how inaccessible justice and the police are to outside influence at home, but due to the fact of their loose connection with the country.

The extreme form of pressure, intimidation with or without physical violence, always attains its end and nothing could better show the immense gulf between East and West than the following tale. A high official of the Public Health Department was engaged in one of those crusades against the scourges of Egypt, which would form in themselves a glorious chapter of our activities there and would alone fully justify the occupation. This time it was bubonic plague, which only twenty years ago was endemic but is now hardly remembered. Arriving at a village in Upper Egypt, he instructed the Omdeh to notify every case in his district. At his persistent refusal, he lost his patience and hit the Omdeh over the head with his stick in the presence of many of the men of the village. Blood flowed freely from the wound, but the next day many cases were notified and the patients segregated, with the result that the plague was quickly stamped out. The Omdeh came to see the official before his departure and thanked him for the measures he had taken and the lives he had saved. He also expressed his gratitude for having been struck before the men of the village, for he argued that he knew how necessary it was to isolate infection, but the ignorant villagers mistrusted government doctors



and would have revenged themselves on him for betraying their kinsfolk ; " but when they saw you hit me," he added, " they realized I couldn't resist and absolved me from blame."

The East understands and respects force, whatever form it takes, but parleying and concessions are invariably looked on as a confession of weakness. The admirable continuity of policy of our Foreign Office has steered England through many critical days, but of late there has been too much bargaining and latitude generally and the first principle of Eastern policy, the pith of which is contained in Lord Dufferin's phrase—"the masterful hand of a resident would soon have bent everything to his will"—appears to have been forgotten.

The mere description of the disastrous events of the last few years creates an atmosphere of censure, which it is difficult to dispel, and though there have been obvious mistakes of policy and defects of administration, the tide of adverse circumstance was so strong throughout this period, that it was perhaps beyond human power to stem it. Nevertheless, in reviewing the events of five years ago after this lapse of time, it can escape no one, at all familiar with conditions in Egypt, that the policy adopted was not sound. Harsh oppressive measures, followed by capitulation, are deplorable anywhere, but quite fatal in the East, where generous impulse is always regarded as weakness.

But when energetic measures were really necessary, as in the period of political assassinations, they were

not forthcoming, and indeed there was on one occasion a mass meeting of all non-official British residents in Cairo at one of the hotels, at which a resolution was passed to urge the authorities to take stronger action against the known miscreants.

The Egyptian has an innate and unconquerable propensity for "fuddling." "Fudl" is the term with which the Egyptian greets any visitor and approaches any proposition. It can be translated by "please," "make yourself comfortable" and "have it your own way" and is the usual term of welcome, designed to put your visitor at his ease and to show him that his proposal is sure of a sympathetic hearing. It has been adopted by British residents to designate a somewhat muddle-headed "bequemlichkeit."

If I read Egyptian national character right, as outlined in the preceding pages, we should have approached the question from the Egyptian angle to start with and welcomed Saad and his companions to London, Paris and Geneva. When every hospitality and consideration had been afforded them, they would have understood that on the morrow of a common victory the whole world stood ranged on our side and would have applauded and upheld our decisions. In this way, with little or no opposition, England would have been able to shape the destinies of Egypt after her own fashion and would not have incurred the loss of prestige entailed by her ignominious surrender to persistent clamour.

Nationalists themselves admit that they never

dreamt of obtaining such far-reaching concessions as have now been granted them.

In Egypt and in the world at large, there seem to be no two views as to the desirability of Westernizing the country and its institutions. There is also no doubt that this end would have been more rapidly attained by a fuller measure of British control throughout the administration for a number of years to come. The intricate machine has now been left in inexperienced hands and the component parts will suffer from lack of directing skill. Contrary to general prognostics, the Nationalists may rapidly acquire the necessary technique, but a breakdown would entail much suffering in Egypt and possibly grave international complications. Time alone will show whether it was impolitic and inhuman to abandon this trust at a juncture when such a departure was attended by risk to all concerned.

### *The Copts.*

The "Gibti" or Copt is the indigenous inhabitant of Egypt who remained Christian and who has given his name to the country. He is the brother of the Moslem majority, but the gulf of religion in the Near East is every bit as wide and deep as that of nationality. The effect of religious training, too, can here be most remarkably seen. The Copt adapts himself more readily to Western ideas than the Moslem, though the same blood runs in the veins of both. He has a greater natural aptitude for the hard logic of the West. He takes kindly to figures and the pen.

The smaller clerical posts of all Government offices abound in Copts. But he has many of the limitations of his Moslem brothers and like them, rarely, if ever, shines in commerce and industry. Nevertheless, he is fairly efficient as a small retail trader and incidentally as a moneylender.

He, too, is naturally a fellah, born to live close to the soil, and the vast majority are undistinguishable to the untrained observer from the Moslem fellahin. The only marked difference between a Mahomedan and Christian village in Upper Egypt is the presence of pigs in the latter. The sons and daughters of well-to-do Copts are all educated in the splendid American missionary institutions of Assiut and elsewhere, and many embrace Protestantism.

His religion is, according to some, a primitive form of Christianity, and to others the original form handed down intact through the centuries. In any case, the rites of their Church and its teachings more nearly resemble those of the Orthodox Church than our own. A very similar monasticism is practised by both, and celibacy, while not enforced in the lower ranks, is the rule among the upper hierarchy.

Centuries of oppression have led the Copt, like so many other subject races of the Near East, to rely on his wits for self-defence. He became the usurer of Upper Egypt and servility robbed him of a certain manly and independent outlook, which is otherwise a common heritage of all who toil in the fields.

But the racial differences between him and the Moslem Egyptian are still so slight as almost to escape

notice, and their mode of living and habits of thought are essentially the same.

With the coming of the occupation, the Copts expected immediate preference on the grounds of community of religion with the newcomers and of the advantage of a slightly greater adaptability. But as they had lost the habit of the exercise of authority even more than the local Moslem and much more so than the Egyptian Turk, this hope was not fulfilled. Nevertheless, they secretly sympathized with the new Christian masters of the country and could not but realize that the age-old oppression of their Moslem neighbours had been mitigated. But as they were in a minority of one to ten in the populous countryside of Egypt, the old servility reasserted itself and they threw in their lot with the party of independence. It is true that very short shrift would have been accorded to them, if they had not done so ; it would therefore be unfair to criticize them too severely. But this is another instance of the desertion of a natural ally in our time of need. Lord Cromer observed that it was disappointing to find that Christianity had not produced any marked mental or moral superiority in the Copt as compared with his Moslem neighbours. He professed to be unable to explain this, though almost in the same breath he gave the only possible explanation in animadverting on the extreme conservatism of the Coptic Church, which he attempted on several occasions to guide in the paths of enlightened reform.

There can be little doubt that it is the elasticity of

Christianity, as practised in Europe, which has contributed more than any other factor to the progress of the West as compared to the immutable East.

Rigid adherence to age-old practice and tribal custom, often based on nothing more than the "Hawadith," or Tradition, in many cases not even the work of contemporary commentators of Mahomed's teachings, has induced among the Moslems a state of mental ossification which has surely no equal, not even among the most confirmed ancestor worshippers of the Far East. The Copt seems to have caught the infection, though perhaps in a slightly less virulent form. He does not progress, however, as fast as his European co-religionist, because of his rigid hyper-orthodoxy, because he adheres to an archaic and unprogressive theology which does not admit of new truths as they are discovered by science and psychology.

But among the million or so natives of this persuasion in Egypt there is a far greater percentage who can read and write than is to be found among the Moslems.

#### *The Jews.*

It is remarkable that no mention is made of the Jews in any of the standard works on Egypt. As they are in the very forefront of all branches of commerce, finance and industry, this omission can only be ascribed to lack of knowledge of that side of Egyptian life.

A very commanding personality, and a British subject, too, I am glad to say, is that of Vita Harari

Pasha. This gentleman entered the service of the Egyptian Government many years ago and rose to be Director-General of State Accounts. Association with Sir Ernest Cassel gave him control of the Mortgage Bank of Egypt. He is Chairman of the National Bank and Chairman of the "Sucreries," an enormous organization which is virtually a monopoly of the sugar business in Egypt. He figures, too, on the Board of the Credit Foncier and on a number of other first-class institutions. His financial genius, loyalty and judgment make his advice invaluable in all matters of finance, and he is always ready to render service of this nature, be it to a humble individual or to the Residency in questions of financial policy.

Joseph Aslan Cattai Pasha is associated with him in many of these undertakings, and Mme. Cattai, who is Dame d'honneur to the Queen of Egypt, can well be described as the leader of Egyptian Society. Her salon is the recognized meeting place of Diplomatic circles and of the distinguished members of the foreign colonies.

There are a number of private bankers, who enjoy a very high reputation, and their influence, though not so publicly exercised as that of the two former, is none the less considerable. Manchester goods figure first in the imports of Egypt and the vast majority of this trade is in the hands of the Jews. Most of these, again, are of British nationality, as many of them were born and brought up in Manchester, though of local origin. Among them the Ades family is in the front rank. Coal is largely handled by the Rolos,

who have always distinguished themselves by loyalty to Great Britain. In the handling of the cotton crop, the Jews do not figure so prominently, unless it is in the financing of it. Nevertheless, there are some important Jewish firms among the big exporting houses.

This pre-eminence of the Jews in commerce is most noticeable all over Egypt. Indeed, both Cairo and Alexandria may be said to have their commerce based on Jewish foundations.

Enough has been said and sufficient instances given to indicate the extremely important rôle played by this community in matters of finance and commerce in Egypt. In their private lives the Jews are generous to all, they help and protect their own poor, and their educational system is very highly developed. But what really distinguishes them from all other communities in the country is the very high standard of their commercial morality. This, indeed, is a common feature of the Near East. Throughout this part of the world, which is full of pitfalls for the unwary British trader, by far the most satisfactory people to do business with are the Jews.

They are also distinguished by their prominence in the intellectual life of the country and they have certainly more than any other community imbibed the essentials of European civilization. An English gentleman of the same faith once told me that he was astonished at the high standards of the Jewish community of Egypt and with this opinion I heartily concur. He added that he doubted whether



a better representative group of that persuasion could be found in any other country. Any resident in Egypt, who has used his opportunities and his eyes in obtaining an insight into Egyptian conditions, cannot but be struck by the most important and beneficent rôle played by the Jews. In fact, outside official circles, I would go so far as to place them *primus inter pares* of the peoples of Egypt from the point of view of the influence they wield in the Westernization of the country.

*The Syrians.*

Syrians, local born or immigrants from Syria, form one of the most important communities in Egypt. Yet of all the non-indigenous groups they have attracted the least attention. When discussing Syrians in relation to Egyptian affairs, Christian Syrians are invariably meant. Moslem Syrians have so much in common with Moslem Egyptians that immigrants of this category blend and are absorbed. The following remarks therefore apply exclusively to the Christian Syrian community.

They form the only substantial link between Europe and the Near East. The main reason of this is that they are of white race and as white in colouring as most southern Europeans, in contrast to the swarthier Arab. Arabic is nevertheless their mother tongue. They sometimes lay claim to a strong strain of Crusader blood, but mostly admit that they are Christian Arabs.

It is little realized what an impassable barrier

the Arabic language is to free communication between the East and the West. Europeans of great ability may master the tongue as a result of years of close study, but rarely, if ever, is a foreigner to be found who knows as much Arabic as anyone can acquire of, say, French in three months.

The Syrian is almost invariably educated in either one of the excellent Jesuit schools which abound in the Near East or by American missionaries. In due course he becomes the natural intermediary between the European and the Oriental. This useful function has not been appreciated at its true worth and far greater use of the Syrians' great abilities should have been made by our authorities. They consider themselves as belonging rather to Europe than the East, and this claim is well substantiated by their markedly superior intelligence, as compared with the average Oriental, and their ready adaptability to Western methods.

Alone among the local elements, if we exclude the Jew, who is naturally a cosmopolitan, and the Armenians, who are only a handful in Egypt, he competes with Europeans on level terms in every branch of activity; and not only competes but shines. Thus the Arabic press in Egypt, or rather that part of it which has any claim to our serious consideration, is exclusively in the hands of the Syrian. The "Ahram" and the "Mokattam," whose fortunes are directed by Tecla Bey and Dr. Nimr respectively, are the most important local organs. It is the sympathy of gentlemen such as these two which

should have been most earnestly solicited by British authorities in Egypt. Unfortunately little, if anything, was done to win them over to our side, and this I consider a most grave tactical error.

But it is not only in the vernacular Press that Syrians have attained distinction. They have competed, and very successfully, as witness the immense fortune of the Lutfallahs, with the Egyptian on his own ground, that is in farming. And with the big stores of Europe, none of which have been so successful in Egypt as the chain of department stores, so efficiently managed by the Sednaouis. The parent establishment in the Place Khazindar at Cairo is modelled on the Printemps in Paris and this huge *organization, as efficient and well run as anything of its kind in Europe*, gives one furiously to think. In my opinion such enterprise and ability would naturally imply the capacity to manage organizations of the first magnitude in any other branch of activity and the Syrian will soon be asking himself, if he does not already do so, why he is being governed by the French in his native mountains.

Many have reached high rank in Government service and as merchants and leaders of industry they run the European very close indeed. One of the largest cotton seed presses in Egypt is controlled and directed by the Abu Shanab family. Fitted with the latest machinery from Ruston Hornsby, and with signs of efficient management on every side, there is nothing to distinguish it from the best conducted industrial plants in Egypt under the

control of Europeans. The contrast is seen in the short-lived industries founded by Moslem Egyptians, which show all the disorder and litter of the East ; in fact no big industrial plant in Egypt has ever been founded and successfully conducted by Mahomedans, while, to drive home my point, the Syrian has shown himself capable of competing with the European even on the essentially European field of industry.

In the liberal professions too they more than hold their own. In a word they are Europeans in every respect except for the geographical accident of their birth. This is their tragedy and very deeply they feel it too.

Some may object that their commercial morality is deplorable, but it is no worse than that of the many races of the Balkan peninsula. In matters of the intellect they excel and in their social life they differ but slightly from southern Europe. One finds many admirable qualities and charming personalities among them. The leaders of the community have frequently married into the great houses of Europe and some can even claim a remote relationship by marriage to royal families. These cannot but compare the welcome afforded them in Rome, Paris and Madrid to the somewhat frigid attitude of the British in Egypt. Perhaps this attitude should not be censured too severely, as I hear similar complaints of their treatment by the French in Syria.

Be that as it may, here we had one of the wealthiest, most enlightened and most influential communities in Egypt, ready to do us any service we might have

required from them. We were so ill-advised as not even to proffer them a hand.

A considerable number of them should have been allowed to reach positions of authority in the Government service, as only by this means was intimate contact with current thought in Egypt possible.

The Phillipides case aroused much controversy in Cairo. This was a Syrian, in spite of the Greek name, who had been for a number of years our bulwark against hostile political intrigue and no one can forget or can fail to regret the efficient manner in which he forestalled every move of the agitator. Irregular presents of carpets, etc., were proved against him and he was replaced by well intentioned British officers and Egyptian or Sudan officials, who were always at sea. It may be wrong to expect and it is certainly impolitic always to insist on home standards in local officials in the Near East.

It is my contention that in political bureaus of this nature an Englishman must of necessity be unable to bridge the gulf between East and West. Our natural ally in these circumstances is the European of the Near East and the Syrian's mother tongue being Arabic too gives him an inestimable advantage. A small handful of officials like Phillipides under careful control, to see that they did not too greatly abuse their powers, would have smoothed over our perplexities and prevented half the trouble. Without them the Englishman cannot hope to keep his finger on the pulse of the bazaars.

In this and other matters the Syrian was not

cultivated to anything like the extent his accomplishments and capabilities, not to mention his sympathies, rendered advisable. It is true that objections to their extensive employment would have been raised by the Egyptians, as it was in Cromer's time, when it was decided that only Syrians of fifteen years' residence in Egypt should be entitled to enter Government service. But these could have been overridden. There are numbers of them employed in clerical capacities in all Departments, but it is in the higher posts that they should have figured as our allies. By this omission was perpetrated one of the gravest errors of those who were responsible for the administration of the country during the troubles.

Recent visits to Syria have left me with the impression that the Syrians are not so Francophile as they used to be. Any foreign domination must indeed be hard for such an intelligent and enterprising race. Their own country consists of a narrow strip of seaboard and a mountainous and barren hinterland, with one fertile break in the plain of the Bekaa. The educated among them, therefore, go abroad to seek fortune and are not slow in finding it.

The Aleppine is reputed to be the most gifted among them. In fact the proverb says, "The lame man from Aleppo walks to Bagdad." The Damascus Syrian shines as a merchant and contiguity with the desert and the Bedouin has made a stout breed of him. The physique of the Syrian from Beyrouth has been deteriorated by inbreeding, but it is regarded as the capital of the intellectual and social life of Syria,

a country which, though poor, yet endows its sons with great natural gifts.

*The Greeks.*

It was Lord Kitchener who first appreciated the Greeks at their true value, in the opening up of new countries. He said of them that they were the harbingers of civilization, and the truth of this description will be gratefully realized by all who have spent some portion of their lives in remote North African outposts.

For the European it is almost impossible to conceive the distances in the inaccessible parts of the Sudan. The official despatched from Khartoum will often spend a month in joining his post. Beer, when it has to be carried through a "Tsetse" belt by native porters, costs sometimes as much as ten shillings a bottle. And the first real sign of settled conditions is the arrival of the ubiquitous "bakal" or Greek general tradesman. Sardines and marmalade appear for the official's breakfast table as by enchantment. Whisky, a most necessary medicine, is there when required. The uneducated palate of the native is catered for with "araki," the universal strong drink of the Near East, and a vile cognac, brewed from sugar cane. Olives, cheese, bales of rough cloth, string and all the simpler wants of Africa can here be satisfied.

In fact the Greek pioneer in the Sudan carries on the tradition of the purveyor of everything that his brothers have established in every village throughout Egypt. The Greek bakal starts in the smallest way :

bread and olives, with a little white cheese, form his only diet : he sleeps under the counter of his little shop : his grimy apron covers his only suit : his exiguous earnings either go back intact, into the shop, for he has no expenses, or are let out at high interest to the improvident fellahin. A little land speculation and cotton buying follow, and in a few years' time, as likely as not, he will grace the drawing-rooms of Alexandria. There is some residue from his glorious ancestry which makes him a not incongruous figure anywhere, whatever his origin.

His remarkable aptitude for commerce has made him a power in Egypt. The Greek is a coast dweller and regards these early years as a necessary period of exile and in due course, with few exceptions, filters down to Alexandria. The Greek community in Cairo is unimportant, though containing two or three prominent figures, among whom should be mentioned the Cozzikas, who own an immense factory at Tura, near Cairo, for the distilling of spirit from sugar cane and who are multi-millionaires. The Casdaglis, too, have a very sizeable proportion of the Manchester goods trade in their hands.

But it is in Alexandria that the Greek influence is chiefly felt and the big cotton firms, from Choremi Benachi downwards, and shipping and insurance interests are as powerful as those of any other nationality.

One of the most marked characteristics of the Greek is his fervent patriotism, and instances of this are seen in the fine hospitals and schools with which he



has endowed his community. The Benachi and Salvago schools of Alexandria and the Greek hospitals in this town and in Cairo have been much more liberally endowed by the munificence of private donors than similar British institutions in the country.

Their unfailing devotion and loyalty to the cause of England in Egypt commands our gratitude, and with the exception of the Jews, they are the only community who have shown themselves steadfast to us throughout the recent troubles.

It can be stated that he takes no part whatever in the public life of Egypt, although he is intensely interested in all Greek questions and pours out his money for his own political purposes. A small number figure in the counsels of the Municipality of Alexandria, but as this service is of an honorary character, it is safe to say that the whole community, with the further exception of a handful of professional men, is engaged in commerce and industry. And in this branch of social activity the Greek can more than hold his own with his European competitors. Their political influence is nil.

While a free social intercourse is noticeable among the well-to-do of the other communities, the Greek keeps very much to himself. His racial pride is intense and he is convinced of his superiority over the other struggling elements of cosmopolitan Egypt. In this respect, however, he makes an occasional exception of the Englishman.

*The Armenians.*

The Armenian in Egypt is the exact counterpart of his brother from Asia Minor. He is nearly always bi-lingual, and talks indifferently Armenian or Turkish; even some of those who have been for generations in Egypt are still familiar with the latter tongue. The Turkish tradition of oppression, tempered with an occasional appreciation of his qualities, still lives in Egypt. In Constantinople, during the last hundred years, Armenians have been in a number of instances entrusted with the portfolios of Finance and Foreign Affairs. A similar recognition of their special aptitudes has been a feature of Egyptian politics. In fanatical outbreaks the Armenian has always been the first victim in Turkey. During the recent revolts in Egypt, "Masr lil Muslimin" (Egypt for the Moslems) was freely interspersed with the Nationalist cry of "Masr lil Masryin" (Egypt for the Egyptians). Indeed there is little doubt that the two were confounded in the minds of the mob. The atavistic urge awoke and the first community to be attacked en masse was the Armenian. They had to be collected from all over Cairo and concentrated in camps outside the city.

The Armenian has certain unlovely traits in his character which have too been frequently commented on to need repetition. Col. Elgood, in his *Egypt and the Army*, throws an illuminating light on their national shortcomings in his description of the refugee camps at Port Said. In the fastnesses of the

Dersim Mountains and the wild country round Van and Erzeroum he is the stout and hardy mountaineer which such regions invariably breed. But elsewhere the Turkish blight has eaten to the core and sapped his virility and his faults are the usual vices of servitude.

There are, I believe, no statistics of the numbers of Armenians in Egypt, but they are probably well under ten thousand. One or two of the great families, who have a tradition of public service dating from the days of Turkish domination, such as the Nubars, still wield some slight public influence, but nowadays the presence of this community is hardly perceivable in the body politic.

In industry, however, a few have become prominent and particularly in the manufacture of cigarettes, which is one of the big industries of Egypt, and is now practically controlled by firms such as Matossian, Melkonian, Gamsaragan and others. They play no rôle in the cotton business or finance, and this is remarkable, considering their special abilities which have led to the success of such eminent financiers as Gulbenkian and others in the capitals of Europe.

Of all the local communities of Egypt, I can only call to mind one individual who has distinguished himself in the field of letters, and that is the late Yacoub Pasha Artin, who is the author of the standard work on land tenure in Egypt, and also of a number of monographs on education, Saracenic art, etc., and a work on the Sudan. With the exception of this Armenian, the chronicles of Egypt, legal and historical

volumes, books of reference, travel and scientific record, have all been the work of foreigners.

The practice of including one Armenian in the Cabinet would now appear to be dying out. The Nationalists insist on regarding them as foreigners, and in fact the Armenian has so little connection with the country and plays so unimportant a rôle in public affairs, that in future his only claim to notice will be in the character of a successful foreign trader.

*The Englishman in Egypt.*

Forty years of political supremacy have given the Englishman an assured position in the country, of which perhaps he has not taken full advantage. In whatever sphere his work lies, he is invariably found in authority; it has in this way come about that, whereas nearly all other foreign communities have regarded Egypt as a land of opportunity, where fortunes may be found, and therefore immigrated in numbers on this quest, the Englishman has as a general rule only gone there to take up some position he has been offered. The Greek and the Italian in particular live in the country and identify themselves with local life and conditions. They are petty retail traders and artisans and often settle in Egypt.

But not so the Englishman, who goes there either as a Government official or to take up some definite post in a bank or one of the larger cotton export houses. There are, of course, a few exceptions and among them Mr. Davies Bryan has rendered con-

siderable service to British trade by his successful management of his two retail establishments at Cairo and Alexandria. British retail traders in these two towns could be counted on the fingers and the same applies to wholesale merchants, who are conspicuous by their absence except in the cotton business, in which indeed they figure very prominently.

Most other nationalities are much more widely represented in both the retail and wholesale trade of the country. Many explanations have been given for this; the true one is, I think, that the Englishman's ideas are apt to be extravagant. In his opinion, British political ascendancy gives him a title to special consideration in the world of commerce and to social preferment. He must join a Club and expects home leave at frequent intervals. Other Europeans are much less pretentious and indeed lay no claim to treatment on a different plane to that accorded to the local Syrian or Jew or other clerk of the country. In a word the higher standard he demands handicaps the Englishman, and the Greek and the Italian shopkeeper can undersell their British competitor, because they can undereat him.

But in the East this is a common trait of Anglo-Saxons or Nordics, as Americans now like to call those to whom they ascribe the qualities of supermen. The Hunkie and the Dago, terms which cover I believe the rest of Europe, have less inflated ideas and are content to start as artisans or as a petty retail trader. Some, but not many, attain affluence; nearly all earn more than they would at home.

To the official class of Englishman reference is continually being made elsewhere. I need not therefore elaborate here, beyond animadverting once more on their peculiarly self-contained and somewhat artificial existence. In the main they live exactly the same lives as people of similar circumstances would at home. The morning is spent at their Government offices, which forms their only contact with the country. Immediately after lunch they repair en masse to the Sporting Club to play their favourite game; from there to their club in town, where only their own kind are admitted. They live in little suburbs and coteries which have many points of resemblance with suburban England. In fact their lives are based on the assumption that their presence in Egypt is a geographical accident which must be neutralized at all costs.

On the whole this is probably the best possible system, though its drawbacks are patent. Lack of contact with current local thought is certainly the main disadvantage. Lord Edward Cecil's "Leisure of an Egyptian Official" gives an amusing description of the system, though many consider the book somewhat inadequate.

After his visit to Egypt and India, the Crown Prince of Germany expressed himself in very flattering terms on British Colonial methods, but was most disappointed to find his own countrymen everywhere in subservient positions, such as waiters in the hotels, hairdressers and petty traders, etc., whereas the Englishman led a much larger life and occupied

all the more prominent posts. This must have rankled in all Germans, with their much advertised superior Kultur and was probably one of the many causes of that passionate jealousy, which so easily grew into implacable hatred at the outbreak of hostilities.

There is hardly an Englishman to be found outside Government circles, banks and the larger cotton export firms. The Delta Light Railways, a private Company, is managed by an Englishman, so, too, is the Pressage, a group of factories which presses all the cotton leaving the country, and the same is the case with the Egyptian markets and a few other concerns; but these are isolated exceptions.

It has probably a salutary political effect that Englishmen are so rarely found in subordinate positions but invariably in authority. There is however ample scope for more enterprise, and a greater number of Englishmen, handling British goods, would have increased the volume of our trade with Egypt.

#### *Other Europeans.*

The French still enjoy, though in a minor degree, the political prestige they established in pre-occupation days. Most of the higher administrative posts, which were not occupied by Englishmen up to the abolition of the Protectorate, have always been reserved for the French. The Gallic form of culture, which is so readily absorbed by all races of the Levant, has also given them a considerable advantage in

other spheres. There is much more French and Belgian capital engaged in Egypt than British. The Sugar monopoly, the Heliopolis Company (of which the Managing Director is an Englishman), the tramways, the gasworks, the Credit Foncier and many other of the most important enterprises of the country are in French and Belgian hands. These, with the Suez Canal, give the French a predominant place in commercial undertakings, of which they have taken full advantage, and it is to be feared that the recent political changes will enhance their position to the detriment of our own.

During the War the most loyal co-operation was always forthcoming from our Allies in general, and in particular the Suez Canal Company responded generously to every fresh call made on their resources. But the veiled antagonism, which nearly blazed out in the Fashoda incident, and has never ceased to smoulder in spite of the agreement of 1904, expressed itself again by covert, though officially disavowed, sympathy with the cause of the Nationalists.

In view of our recognition of the *fait accompli* in Tunis and Algiers, and of our complete official and individual abstention from active or implied criticism of French rights or French methods, which as the outside world knows well enough are harsher than our own, we have reason to feel aggrieved by this attitude.

It was shared, though to a lesser extent, by Italians, who on the whole were neutral. This community is the largest among Europeans proper, from which



category I wittingly except the Alexandrian Greek, who can be regarded to all extents and purposes as belonging to the country. They are the skilled artisans of Egypt and owing to their gift for mechanical craftsmanship, practically every workshop is in charge of an Italian foreman. They have their own Bank; and development of the motor industry in Turin has given them the lead in this branch of industry. In the cotton business they are only beginning to figure and as merchants generally they are not conspicuously successful.

The Swiss, in the person of Mr. Charles Bachler, have the whole of the important hotel industry in their hands. Austrians and Germans are beginning to filter back again, but it will take them a generation to regain lost ground. The only other community of any size is the Maltese, who are extremely loyal and are most useful in subordinate posts, where their knowledge of the country and their reliability under supervision is often invaluable.

### *The Conflict of National Interests.*

Every one of these communities had its particular niche in Egyptian society and its own axe to grind. In this welter of nationalities and conflicting interests the British Administrator had warily to pick his way. In earlier days, diplomatic training and diplomatic support enabled them to avoid the shoals. In certain cases personal prestige overrode all obstacles for a time. Others brought with them cut and dried theories and systems, which had been tried and

approved in more distant colonies, but failed when applied to Egypt. The undisciplined cosmopolitan elements and the untidy minded native found military procedure most irksome of all.

A figure-head who combines prestige and personal dignity is essential, for no one is more impressionable than the Oriental in this respect. If he has had diplomatic training, so much the better, but if not, he should at least surround himself with others trained in that school. In addition a number of officials, familiar with local conditions and languages, should figure in his entourage. Not so very long ago, only one official of the Residency had first hand knowledge of the country and knew the language well. Indeed, Mr. R. A. Furness, the gentleman in question, combined all the qualifications to a quite remarkable degree. Of the Diplomatic staff, Mr. Clark Kerr has won golden opinions for himself and has on more than one occasion kept Zaglul within the bounds of reason by tactful handling. But there have been a number of introductions of officials who have been most successful in other spheres, but whose lack of knowledge of French and Arabic and complete ignorance of Oriental and cosmopolitan mentality rendered their views on policy of negligible value.

If it is considered that I have insisted too much on the value of diplomatic training, I would ask my readers to bear in mind, not only the bitter hatred of all Egyptians, but also the estrangement of the local minorities, who should have been our natural supporters, as their interests and personal security

were bound up with a continuance of the Occupation, and the scarcely veiled and sometimes even active animosity of all the foreign colonies. Indeed, the greatest encouragement, which could have been given to the Nationalist movement, was the open sympathy of the foreign and local communities. The agitation would certainly have fallen to the ground for lack of conviction but for this curious phenomenon, the desertion of our friends and allies, on the morrow of a common victory, from our cause, when they had everything to lose and nothing to gain from the withdrawal of British influence. Such a state of mind could only have been engendered by lack of diplomacy.

There has been a long struggle for control in Egyptian affairs between the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, and that mutual admiration society, the Egyptian Army (which is in truth a very admirable institution). It has produced many brilliant men, as for instance Lord Kitchener and Sir John Maxwell. But in reviewing recent events one cannot but be struck by the tranquillity of the country in the days of Sir Milne Cheetham and Mr. Mervyn Herbert, which upset the calculations of all who apprehended troubles from our going to war with the co-religionists of Mahomedan Egypt; and one cannot but compare this period of unexpected tranquillity with the subsequent ebullition, when diplomatic counsels no longer prevailed.

Conspicuous prestige, experience of colonial administration and even local knowledge cannot make

up entirely for lack of diplomatic skill. A combination of all the qualities required, as found in Lord Cromer, must of necessity be extremely rare. I hope I have given some idea of the number and variety of conflicting interests which are met with in this country, and which at the best of times render the British administrator's task so formidable; but when a concerted national movement, extraneously encouraged, is added to these, it becomes well nigh impossible.

The difficulties created in Egypt in the period immediately following the Armistice by general lip service to the cause of autonomy for all and sundry is most forcibly illustrated by an incident which came to light when Zaglul Pasha was arrested in March, 1919. He was searched on that occasion and the only document found on him was a cutting from the "Daily Express" which contained Wilson's fourteen points, the one referring to the rights of small nationalities being heavily underlined.

The temper engendered by this illusive idealism swept Egypt off its feet and British authorities too lost sight of realities, as is shown by the reservation at the time of the abolition of the Protectorate of certain points for subsequent discussion, which it is very obvious are, and always have been, much too vital to permit any concession. Such are the Suez Canal and the Sudan and it was an error to allow the Nationalists to believe that further agitation might induce Great Britain to yield on these points.

When to these continually recurring perplexities and dilemmas is added a national opposition under

an intractable and refractory leader, the task was perhaps beyond human agency to compass. Even in more tranquil times Egypt was known as the grave of reputations; Lord Cromer took his intact with him into retirement, though the Denshaw incident cast a heavy shadow on his last days of power. Lord Kitchener held Egypt in the hollow of his hand; but British Proconsuls other than these have had to cope with a tide of adverse circumstance which it was perhaps beyond the power of any individual to stem.

## X

### COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN EGYPT

IN Egypt, perhaps more than anywhere else in the world, fortune flows in certain well-defined currents and the young swimmer, anxious to make his way in the world, would be well advised to float with them.

Thus the town of Alexandria, which must be approaching the half million mark, is occupied entirely with the handling of the cotton crop. Here all the big exporting houses are situated and all the cotton grown in the country finds its way to their shounahs. It is an enviable business, conducted with the minimum of trouble and the smallest staff. In boom years firms such as Choremi Benachi have been known to make nearly a million pounds profit on their transactions and some of the great houses build up enormous fortunes for their partners on the efforts of a staff of thirty or forty clerks.

In clubs and drawing-rooms the main subject of conversation are the latest quotations from Liverpool and spot prices from America. Everyone down to the Greek grocer's assistant has a flutter now and again. Many of the big fortunes are known to have been based on a successful venture of this nature and the youth of the country is thus fired to emulation, but the cautious recognize that for every coup brought off a number

of the smaller speculators have been put out of action.

The fever that possesses the town in boom seasons such as 1919, when cotton reached 200 dollars a cantar for a giddy moment, is indescribable. Even the fields are emptied and the fellah throngs the Bourse, producing enormous wads of notes, when more margin is required. They leave their hard earned money in the hands of the "Black Band," as the Syrians, always speculating on a fall, have come to be known. But even the professional speculators are worsted sometimes, as witness the story of an illiterate Egyptian porter from the Zagazig Ginning factory, which is vouched for by the general manager of the Associated Cotton Ginners. This man came to Alexandria in the autumn of 1919 with the savings of a lifetime, amounting in all to some £40, and by doubling and redoubling his position at every fresh rise and selling out at 200 dollars after coming into the market at 60, cleared in six months a matter of £300,000. He thereupon bought the gin where he had been employed for £71,000 and I am told that it is the most efficiently run gin in Egypt.

In Alexandria, too, are situated the big cotton presses, one of the most important industrial undertakings of the country. The whole of the Western end of the town, Minet el Bassal, is devoted to the storing and pressing of cotton, and the uncrowned king of this region is a young Englishman, Mr. Alton Mills, whose influence and prestige among his workmen, known as the toughest element in Egypt, is such that

during the riots, when no European's life was safe even in the centre of the town, he circulated freely in the most turbulent native quarters and attended to his business every day without molestation. He is typical of the tremendous influence a certain type of European exercises over the untutored Oriental and it is much to be regretted that the type was not more often found in Government circles. He reminds me very much of a phrase I once heard concerning the proper way of handling native labour. It was "justice when possible, severity always," though I doubt whether his prestige would stand so high, unless he had always adhered to the most scrupulous justice in his dealings with his men.

Shipping ranks next in the economics of Alexandria, as practically all the import and export trade of the country goes through the port. Apart from these two there is no important industry or commerce in the city, except a brisk retail trade to supply its current wants.

Cairo, on the contrary, takes no part whatever in the handling of the cotton crop, though a small army of Levantine intermediaries negotiate sales on behalf of the big native landowners with Alexandria. Fortunes in the capital are made by land speculation, banking, the Manchester goods trade and the tourist traffic. The thousand and one activities that offer opportunities of solid pecuniary reward in most European towns again are lacking here, and almost without exception it will be found that the rich man has made his fortune in one or other of these ways.



But whereas in Alexandria the foreign-born element controls the market, in Cairo, on the contrary, the foreigner very rarely comes to the fore. He is frequently found in positions of executive authority, which tends to show that the local financial element appreciates the reliability of the Westerner. An excellent instance is afforded by the National Bank of Egypt, every department of which is under British management, though it was financed almost entirely from Cairo.

French and Belgian capital has been very much more active in this city than British. Of the essentially British institutions, the Anglo-Egyptian Bank is in the forefront, but is overshadowed by the *Credit Foncier Egyptien*. Belgian finance is well represented in the Tramways, the *Sucreries* and *Raffineries*, which has a virtual monopoly of the sugar business in Egypt, and the *Heliopolis Company*.

Much of the preponderating Gallic influence, which is so noticeable, can be ascribed to the subtle propaganda of the Jesuit schools. The propagation of the French language has familiarized the country with French methods and habits of thought and the natural impulse is to co-operate with our Allies rather than with us, whenever a new undertaking is mooted.

It says much indeed for British standards of fair play, and perhaps a little for British lack of foresight, that the whole world has been allowed to compete in Egypt on equal terms. The amount of French and Belgian capital invested in the country and earning good dividends must be very many

times as much as ours. It would even appear that concessions are more easily obtained by local and foreign financiers than by the British, owing perhaps to a hypertrophied sense of rectitude. Whereas other nationalities encourage extensive propaganda, and liberally endow their politically-inspired schools and hospitals, Englishmen in Egypt are all familiar with the tremendous difficulty of obtaining the smallest grant from home for similar British institutions.

We have reason indeed to be proud of the result and can point to Egypt as the finest example of disinterested Colonial administration that history has to show, but the resident Englishman cannot but regret sometimes that more advantage was not taken of our political supremacy in the country.

Looked at from the largest point of view, the prosperity which we have created in Egypt has redounded more to our profit than to that of any other nationality. Egypt supplies Lancashire and in turn absorbs an amount of imports from there which more than counterbalance sporadic advantages reaped by other countries in other fields. So the balance, in spite of our neglect of our opportunities, is perhaps in our favour.

#### *Cotton.*

The main industry, of course, is the growing of cotton and the whole country is gradually becoming a forcing ground to supply the needs of Lancashire. It is not generally known that the plant was first

introduced only towards the middle of the last century, but the soil was found to be so well adapted to its growth that in less than a century King Cotton has come to hold the same undisputed sway in Egypt as does King Coal in Yorkshire. Everything is sacrificed to his needs. A most marked feature of the Egyptian landscape is the almost complete absence of trees, which can only be ascribed to the great value of the land for purposes of cotton growing ; it is far too precious to bear unproductive ornaments, even in a country where the absence of clouds would render a little shelter doubly welcome.

Thanks to the enterprise of British engineers, perennial irrigation, supplied from the Barrage near Cairo and the Assiout and Assuan Dams, has almost entirely replaced the basin system. The silt brought down from the virgin highlands of Abyssinia replaces the nutritive elements of the soil every year and renders it inexhaustible. Thus the Egyptian has no natural limits set to his exploitation of the land and as soon as one crop is gathered in, another takes its place. Nitrates, it is true, are brought in considerable quantities from Chili, but are chiefly employed only by the larger agricultural concerns to enable a still further impetus to be given to the exploitation of the soil. The smaller cultivator relies rather on the natural annual fertilizing of the land by the brown Nile mud.

The Egyptian fellah is the most highly specialized of all agricultural specialists. It has become one of the difficulties of the Government to ensure a reason-

able proportion of the land being employed for the cultivation of food; and measures are continually being taken to limit the acreage which can be laid down to cotton, with a view to increasing the home grown food supply. But no other crop gives such returns, as can be readily seen from the value of agricultural land in Egypt, which on occasion has indeed been sold at £800 and upwards an acre, and can always command £300 in the most fertile tracts.

*Banking and Insurance.*

It is in these two fields of all the commercial activities of Egypt that is reflected economically the supremacy that the British have enjoyed politically for the last forty years. Hardly a feddan of the rich cotton lands of the country is owned by an Englishman or exploited by British capital. With the exception of a few first-class shops, such as Davies Bryan, we have no share of the retail trade. The wholesale import trade, by far the largest item of which are cotton goods from Manchester, is exclusively in local hands, though, as mentioned elsewhere, many members of these firms are British subjects, but not, if I may say so, Englishmen. The Associated British Manufacturers do a very large business in engines, chiefly for agricultural purposes. We have a large share of the cotton export business. But nowhere do the British really control the market except in Banking and Insurance.

The early associations and training of all local communities inclines them at first to deal with the

foreign Banks, the most important of which are the Banco di Roma and the Comptoir d'Escompte ; the Banque Belge pour l'Etranger runs these two close, owing to the important Belgian industrial undertakings in the country and that efficiency of management which distinguishes Belgian enterprise abroad.

But the larger methods of British bankers are attracting an ever wider clientele. Most of the capital of the National Bank and the Agricultural Bank was subscribed locally, but as the management is and has always been exclusively British, one likes to think of these as British institutions. The Anglo-Egyptian Bank is British all through and enjoys a very high reputation. The British Bank of West Africa, though a newcomer, is already making itself felt. The Ionian Bank, whose head offices are in London, has always specialized in the financing of the cotton crop and does a large share of this business.

Insurance is the only business in which British institutions can claim a monopoly. Practically every important company in the world is eager to obtain a share of the lucrative cotton business and are all represented in Egypt. The Union de Paris, working in conjunction with its subsidiary, the Nationale d'Egypte, the only local Company, have obtained a solid footing, not so much directly but rather owing to the financial interests represented on the Board of the local Company. Here again familiarity with French methods influences a considerable volume of business among the Gallicized Levantines. But with this exception and half a dozen of less importance,

British institutions control the market. In fact 90 per cent. of the internal business is written by British Companies, and practically every bottom, coming into or out from Alexandria, is insured in Cornhill. In general business the Royal Exchange Assurance leads and in life, the Gresham. Competition is international and very acute, as shown by the presence of over one hundred companies from all over the world in this field, and this attests, too, how desirable the business is considered.

### *Iron and Steel.*

The most scrupulous fairness in tendering for supplies for the railways, etc., has always been observed, but the mere fact of British control of the Ministry of Public Works has given home manufacturers a slight advantage, owing to measurements, standards and other requirements being based on the British rather than the Continental model. In this way in the past most of the heavy steel and iron orders have been placed at home, though on every occasion when a lower tender was forthcoming from abroad it was accepted in preference to our own. In fact to such an extent was this scrupulous impartiality insisted on, that within a few months of the cessation of hostilities a large order went to Germany, and this raised very considerable resentment, not so much among the British, who are hardened to this species of folly, but among our Allies.

Czecho-Slovakia is fast developing into a serious competitor in this field and has of late been sending a

considerable amount of brewing and other heavy machinery into the country. Belgium, and to a lesser extent France, always had a share.

The motor market has been captured by Italy and Fiats would seem to be the most popular cars in the country. America and France are well represented, but practically the only British cars seen are a handful of Rolls Royces and Daimlers in the Palace and among the Pashawat.

The value of co-operative methods is well illustrated by the success of the Associated British Manufacturers in Egypt and the Sudan. A very sizeable proportion of the agricultural machinery, pumps, stationary engines, etc., which the country absorbs is supplied by various home manufacturers through this channel.

*Future prospects.*

Bulk imports and exports are largely in British hands, and coal, cotton and cotton piece goods almost entirely. This is a very satisfactory situation, but nevertheless full advantage has not been taken of our opportunities. Retail and commission business is entirely in the hands of the foreigner and the Levantine. The British seem unwilling to pay attention to minor details and keep their eyes fixed rather on major issues. The system appears to have worked admirably, but there is no doubt that a vast potential market has been lost to us through these methods.

Recent political changes in the status of Egypt will affect adversely our commerce with the country.

One cannot blind oneself to the Anglophobia which pervades public and private opinion and there is little doubt that Egyptian officials will not hold the scales so impartially as the British have in the past. We can therefore safely predict a considerable falling off in large orders for Government supplies. The Manchester goods trade will be less affected, though the gradual impoverishment of the country, which is freely predicted, may reduce the market.

The most serious aspect is the possibility of failure in the technical branches of the administration. The incompetence of half a dozen irrigation engineers may impoverish a whole Mudiria. Inexperienced handling of or lack of authority over the men conscripted under the Nile Register for dealing with abnormal situations during the annual rise of the water may result in the flooding of whole districts. An accident of this nature would affect Egypt to the core.

It cannot reasonably be expected that transport will be so efficiently managed as in the past.

Customs, harbours, waterways, in fact all the channels through which goods pass, will offer a greater resistance to their passage. With us transport works so automatically, that it is difficult to realize the conditions obtaining in, say, Roumania and not to mention Turkey, where transport difficulties not only always hamper trade to an inconceivable extent, but also periodically arrest it. Though these systems are still working fairly smoothly in Egypt, as they have the impetus of years of British



control behind them, I confess I am of those who consider, that if Egyptians insist on eliminating the foreign equation completely from their cadres, they will be fortunate to attain even to Balkan standards, though they are undoubtedly considerably more efficient than the Turk. They have the most splendid material to work with, because Egyptian labour is cheerful, willing and capable of feats of endurance, which can be surpassed nowhere. Directing skill, which was hitherto supplied from abroad, is lacking, and the class which should be trained to exercise it, is too busy in asserting its equality with Europe to worry about acquiring the necessary knowledge. If the Egyptian Government can produce the qualified men, to replace the fast disappearing Europeans, it will indeed be a rabbit out of a hat for the bewildered eyes of Europe.

One of the commonest of failings of the Near East is an inability to recognize the sanctity of contract. It has been pointed out elsewhere that the Jews are a notable exception to the general rule and to these should be added a small number of the high-class Greek and Syrian firms.

With Mahomedans, parting with money would appear to be a constitutional disability which pervades the whole community from the Government down to the humblest individual. This peculiarity presents one of the main difficulties for a European firm doing business with natives. The Levantine knows what to expect and exactly how to counteract every elusive move of the debtor. But for the unwary the simplest

transaction is girt about with pitfalls, as the principle on which Mahomedans appear to transact their business would seem to be—payment only under compulsion at the last possible moment.

Thus in the simplest matters such as the letting of a house, there is a general disinclination throughout the country to let to a Mahomedan of whatever station, whereas a European is welcomed at his face value. The unwary who have been attracted by the higher rent promised by a wealthy Mahomedan will always experience the utmost difficulties in overcoming the tergiversations of the tenant.

In the biggest native houses, the servants are paid only on pressure and when convenient to the master. The humble Berberine is as a rule very well treated and is looked on much more as a member of the family than is ever the case with domestics among Europeans. But his condition is rather that of a chattel whom it is everybody's business to take good care of, but whose moral right to a regular wage is sometimes as little recognized as in the old days of slavery. The Berberine will miss his European masters, who are fast leaving Egypt, and will serve in future in homes where he will be assured of humane treatment, but where he will be paid at the convenience of his master and only such amounts as the latter thinks fit to disburse, quite irrespective of agreement.

In the course of centuries inhabitants of the Near East have learnt how to deal with this little weakness and refuse to transact business in the absence of certain safeguards, devised to meet emergencies.

The humble will in particular suffer in future with less chance of redress and the individual defaulter will meet with less opposition in pursuing his devious ways to avoid payment.

But within eighteen months of the abolition of the Protectorate, the outside world has been brought up against a glaring instance of the national failing. Ingrained custom was too strong and such considerations as damage to the country's credit were waived aside at the first slender opportunity Egypt found to default on a plausible motive. On July 30th, 1924, the National Bank of Egypt informed Messrs. Rothschilds that they had been instructed to suspend all further payments for the service of the Ottoman 4 per cent. loan of 1891 and of the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. loan of 1894, which was secured on the Egyptian Tribute. The amounts in the meantime were to be credited to a special account. The Egyptian Government pretend that as the tribute is no longer payable to Turkey, they are no longer obliged to make payments for the service of this loan, and propose to refer the question of their liability to the Hague Tribunal.

The decree of the Egyptian Government, as it appears on the bonds, reads, "the Egyptian Government will continue to pay annually for 61 years, that is until October, 1955, that is to say, until the extinction of the new  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. loan above-mentioned, the irreducible sum of £329,249 6s. 1d. sterling to the Bank of England in London, to be held by the said Bank, at the disposal of the House to whom the service of the said loan may be entrusted." The continuance

of the tribute to Turkey is not made a corollary of the payment of the service of the loan, and therefore whatever arguments Egypt can adduce, she should have continued to meet her liabilities until released by an authoritative decision. It is therefore a clear case of default, and as such will do the country's credit incalculable harm.

### *The Tourists.*

The annual tourist invasion has gradually become an important feature of Egyptian economic life. The country was first discovered by Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son, and in the last thirty years they have built up a business which rivals with the largest undertakings in Egypt. They have now a fleet of half a dozen steamers, some of them 300 feet in length, which ply during the winter between Cairo and Assuan. They have their own dockyard, where they go in extensively for shipbuilding and repairs, and in addition they have an engineering department, which deals in all that the fellah requires in the way of agricultural machinery.

This enterprise of Messrs. Thomas Cook can be said to have created the tourist trade of Egypt. In its wake has sprung up a host of minor and major industries, from the piece-meal manufacture of imitation scarabs to the imposing structures of Palace Hotels.

Every foreign resident who takes an intelligent interest in the country gets bitten sooner or later with the "antika" craze. But the merchants of the

Mouski look on them as a standby to meet expenses in the off-season only. An unerring taste would appear to be the birthright of all Jews, and a handful of this community figure among their customers; the rest of Egypt takes no interest whatever in Arabic and Saracenic art or in Egyptology. Even among the well-to-do it is extremely rare to find anyone who has had the curiosity to go to Luxor or Assuan. A motor trip as far as the Pyramids, with the prospect of a well-cooked dinner at Mena House Hotel, evinces the greatest interest in Egyptology of which native or Levantine is capable.

The Khan Khalili is a carefully preserved Oriental setting, which exists only to exploit the tourist. The same can be said of the art dealers of the European quarters and of the numerous Indian shops, who deal in silks, embroideries and Benares brass-ware. This is a rather fascinating tale of Indian enterprise. The head office of these shops is invariably in Hyderabad, Sind, and a large bulk of the exports of India passes through their hands. Messrs. Pohomull have branches in such widely divergent places as Los Angeles, Tokio, Malta, Gibraltar, the Azores, Brighton and Cairo, not to mention a host of establishments in other parts of the world. And they exist almost exclusively on the tourist traffic in these various places.

The hotel industry is the most important created by the annual invasion. The five big Hotels of Cairo, Shepheard's, the Semiramis, the Continental, Mena House and the Grand, Helouan, and the half-dozen in

Upper Egypt in Luxor and Assuan depend entirely on their winter custom, and of all of them only the first-named will remain open in future during the summer months. Mr. Charles Baehler, whose genial personality is a landmark in Egyptian life, controls the whole of the European hotel industry of the country, and the admirable accommodation and facilities afforded the tourists is the outcome of his enterprise and efficient management.

The character of the traffic has altered very considerably of late. Time was when the illustrious of all lands, from royalty to the uncrowned kings of industry, foregathered in Cairo and Luxor for the winter months to escape the rigours of more northern climes. At the Semiramis and on the decks of private dahabiyehs such favoured ones are still occasionally met. But since the war the annual invasion has become heterogeneous and bulk has taken the place of quality. A great impetus was given to the traffic by the skilful exploitation of the spectacular discovery of Tut Ankh Amen's tomb.

The end of the first season's work left the world agog at the doors of the inner shrine. This year they actually started raising the lid of the sarcophagus and then hung out the notice "to be continued in our next." I am not accusing the authorities of sensationalism, but the most astute impressario could not have timed events more skilfully. In this way the canny traders of the Middle West and New England were persuaded to part from their hard-earned dollars and take the plunge. A number of

the largest liners were chartered by enterprising tourist agents, and every fortnight or so a flood from the newest civilization was let loose on the land to gaze on the relics of the oldest. Kephren could not have treated his slaves more harshly in the building of the Pyramids than did the taskmasters of these hapless tourists. Billiard tables were at a premium and baths (to be used dry, as a resting place) unprocurable, while the Berberine was driven from the unaccustomed splendours of a "Franghi" bedroom, to curl up in odd corners along the corridors of the hotels. Six days was the time usually allotted to "do" Egypt and Palestine. At seven in the morning they were tilted out on the platform of Luxor station, hurried through breakfast and hoisted on to the backs of anything four-footed. Every animal within a radius of a hundred miles was conscripted. The natives more than got their own back for the requisitioning of their cattle during the war. A stiff course of "rubbernecking" round the temples of Luxor and Karnak completed the first day's programme. The next day at dawn they were packed into boats and deposited on the further bank of the river, and so to the tombs of the Kings, to gaze wistfully at the backs of distinguished visitors, nonchalantly descending into Tut Ankh Amen's tomb, to feast their eyes on the arcana withheld from the profanation of the vulgar. Lunch at the Ramaseum near Joseph's granary (an inept arrangement compared to the silos of the Western prairies) and a weary "hike" round by the Colossi, followed by a scramble for food and a

bed, if you're lucky. Two days in Cairo, which are passed in such a whirl that it makes one giddy to think of it, and leaves the sightseer with mental indigestion owing to the impossibility of assimilating the endless flood of facts and fancies, continually poured into their ears by the indefatigable guides.

On the evening of the second day the majority have no volition left and are rounded up at the station and put through the third degree at Jerusalem, Bethlehem and elsewhere. The stout-hearted, however, refuse to leave Shepherd's balcony and enjoy a pleasant and well-earned respite; the acme of their enjoyment is reached in extending ribald greetings to their exhausted fellow travellers on their return.

We have evidently much to learn from American methods of efficient organization. In the organizing of these so-called pleasure trips we have yet to learn our A B C, but I am glad to note that that time-honoured British institution, Messrs. Thomas Cook & Son, have not adopted this ultra-commercial procedure. There are still a number of discriminating travellers, who favour the more leisurely progression of this firm's tours and prefer their methods to those of Colney Hatch, or perhaps I should say Coney Island, or Blackpool.

. The cheapest excursions arrive in mid-August and if any complaints of the heat are made, in a shady corner of the hall at Shepherd's there is a black-board which gives the comparative temperature at New York and Cairo. It is impossible to complain of



117 degrees in the shade, when the wireless announces 118 in New York.

It is counted in America as part of every man's education to have seen something of the old world, and many are enabled to do so by these wholesale methods. The tours are all efficiently run and give excellent value for money ; it is but just to say that, as a rule, the accommodation provided is adequate and ample time is allowed for visiting the points of interest in comfort. But confusion and overcrowding is unavoidable in rush seasons and those who cannot afford the more leisurely tours must expect to be hurried. Tut Ankh Amen is losing his appeal, and every year the tourist agents will find it harder to whip up a flagging interest, and the traffic will return to the normal pre-war standards and proportions.

The annual invasion has latterly come to be regarded almost as a visitation, and many and loud are the complaints of residents, except those who benefit by it. The new type gaze their fill and pay their money at the till, and have destroyed much of the cachet of the winter season. Their influence, too, is reflected in the attitude of the many who cater for their enjoyment and minister to their needs. In the neighbourhood of the better known monuments whole communities and villages of guides, dragomen and donkey boys have grown up and their manners, much polished by earlier associations, have suffered considerably from contact with the lowlier orders from the West. Indeed the quality, which frequented Luxor in more spacious times, put a marked veneer

on that part of the country. The prominent Copts became aggressively European and counted among their friends and acquaintances the great of many lands. Their houses on the river bank bristled with flagpoles and on state occasions there broke from them the emblems of the half dozen or so nationalities, whose consular representatives they were. Constant contact during the winter months with the élite of Europe altered their whole tone and outlook on life and this was reflected in their conversation and deportment, which contrasted strongly with that of the Copts at Assiut and elsewhere. The same spirit percolated down through the whole community, and civility and courtesy from the moment of arrival at Luxor Station was the order of the day. Everything possible is still done to render the visit of the tourist agreeable, but the scarab vendors, donkey boys and guides are no longer discreet and unobtrusive as in the past, but clamour for custom in a most irrepressible manner.

## XI

### EGYPT AND THE SUDAN

At the time of writing Saad Pasha Zaglul is engaged in negotiations with the Prime Minister concerning the future status of the Sudan. There have been some healthy signs indicating that the Labour Government know their mind better than the Coalition and Conservative Governments of the last few years, whose conduct of Egyptian policy has been vacillating in the extreme.

The two points which will have to be considered are, first, Egypt's title and, secondly, her fitness to take over the administration of the country. If these points are considered in the light of reason, it is difficult to see on what Egypt has based her sanguine aspirations.

#### *Egyptian Claims Analysed.*

It was in 1820 that Mohamed Ali effected the definite subjugation of the Sudan, and the title remained undisputed until the Anglo-Egyptian Convention of 1899, though during the period of the Dervish dominium from 1883 to 1898, the Mahdi and his successors did not recognize any sort of Egyptian authority. As was to be expected, sixty odd years of uncontrolled Egyptian rule reduced the country

to a lamentable state of chaos, and Ismail Pasha was clever enough to see that the only hope of recovery lay in European supervision. It was he who engaged the services of Sir Samuel Baker and Gordon. The former of these two reported in 1862 that the country had been utterly ruined by Egyptian methods of Government and was only retained for its lucrative trade in slaves. Later Gordon stigmatized the "Government" as nothing but brigandage of the very worst description.

The fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon Pasha in January, 1885, following on the disastrous expedition under the command of Colonel Hicks, when 10,000 men were swallowed up by the desert (November, 1883), brought home to a somewhat indifferent British public the difficulties and dangers of these desert campaigns. Supplies and transport had to be maintained entirely by native levies. It was shown that no reliance could be placed on disaffected and undisciplined native troops. And disaffection was always rife, for the word "Sudan" had for the Egyptian somewhat the same dread significance as the word "Siberia" for the Russian.

### *The Condominium.*

In 1899 the word "self-determination" had not yet been coined, and the convention which established Anglo-Egyptian condominium was blithely entered into with no thought of the difficulties in which this principle was to involve the world. The maladministration of the Sudan had made its possession a liability.

The "Mahdia" or Dervish domination, from 1883 to 1899, had swept away by conquest Egyptian power in the Sudan. As the reinstatement of Egyptian authority was only possible by British intervention, Egypt logically became a sleeping partner.

Any claim Egyptians can put forward to racial affinities with the Sudanese can be dismissed at once.

It is true they are Africans, just as are the "Fuzzy-Wuzzies," the Dinkas and the Shilluks. But they would stoutly deny any relationship or bloodbrotherhood. And so indeed would the Sudanese. The younger sons of the Berberines have gone abroad for generations to seek fortune—and nearly all to Egypt. The houses of foreigners and the big hotels are staffed almost exclusively with Berberines, but they consider that marriage with an Egyptian woman entails loss of caste. In a word the Egyptians look upon the Sudanese and the Sudanese look upon the Egyptians as an inferior race. The very name "beled-es-Sudan," the country of the blacks, expresses the Egyptian point of view, and in their turn, the hardy Sudanese look on the inhabitants of the Nile Valley north of Assuan as an effeminate race and yellow, through all the ranges of that colour.

The Egyptian then regards and is regarded by the Sudani as a foreigner. There is as big a gulf between them as there is between the Frenchman and the Italian, for instance. Indeed a bigger one, for there is the difference of colour.

Any claim must therefore be based on other considerations. Self-defence and interest, which have

been urged in our case in the question of the Canal, must also be accorded a sympathetic hearing, when put forward by the Egyptians.

There is a very common feeling among Egyptians that the construction of the Makwar dam will enable whoever is in control to put a most effective squeeze on Egypt, by cutting off the water supply. Humanitarian principles and public conscience, which so often err on the side of over-sensibility in England, should reassure them. But they look at it rather from the Oriental point of view—here is the screw, let's turn it—the Oriental is nothing if not an opportunist and measures mankind by his own rule of thumb.

The irrigation engineer will tell you that there is enough and to spare for both countries and that by conservation on the upper reaches of the Nile a more constant level can be expected at the Assuan dam. All responsible opinion, and the best available in the world has been taken, is agreed that there is no danger of any diminution of the water supply and that the fears expressed by the Egyptians are quite groundless. The outcry against the Sudan projects has been one of the main platforms of anti-British propaganda in Egypt. Successive Agents and Consuls-General and High Commissioners in Egypt have all laid great stress on the all-importance of the water supply and are freely quoted. But no reasoned statement has yet been issued from any untainted authority which can call into question the correctness of the calculations of Sir Murdoch MacDonald and his staff of engineers.

From the point of view of the irrigation engineer therefore the claim of special interest is untenable and the childish fears of malicious action on the part of Great Britain, if and when she obtains complete control of the Upper Nile, are not worth our serious consideration.

After the fall of Khartoum in January, 1885, the Mahdi seriously envisaged the conquest of Egypt and many Egyptians can still recall the alarm felt in the Nile valley. The plan was however rendered abortive by his death, but at any moment the fighting spirit of the Sudanese may break forth again and tranquillity on the southern boundary of Egypt can only be ensured by "Pax Britannica."

Remains then the financial interest of Egypt in the Sudan and a claim, based on this consideration, would seem the only serious one Egypt can put forward.

The expedition of 1896-1898 was carried out at a surprisingly small cost. Including railway material and work that has since become of a permanent character, the whole cost of three years of operations amounted to £2,500,000. By arrangement with the parsimonious Ministry of that time, the Egyptian Treasury bore two-thirds of the total and the Home Government contributed only £800,000. These are Lord Cromer's figures.

Again, ever since the establishment of the condominium of 1899 the Sudan has been financially dependent on Egypt. During the last twenty years, this spoon-fed financing of the Sudan has cost Egypt

some £7,000,000, which has perhaps been grudgingly advanced under a succession of British Financial Advisers.

If the present equivocal position is to be perpetuated, these financial arrangements need not be upset. But as it is much to be hoped that His Majesty's Government will take a firm stand on this matter and put an end to the anomaly, Egypt will have to be disinterested, and this will cost the Treasury some £10,000,000, on £7,000,000 of which interest will be payable.

It should never be forgotten that the Sudan campaign was officered and engineered completely by the British. Man power was drawn from Egypt to a certain extent and labour almost exclusively. But no one, not even the Egyptians, could pretend that Egypt would have reconquered the Sudan without our help. With the exception of a handful of students, prompted by El Azhar, the whole Sudan is on our side. It is frankly inconceivable that Egypt could do the job as well as Great Britain. Possession has degenerated into a sleeping partnership, which itself only exists as an act of grace on our part. Racially the affinity between the Egyptian and the Sudani is negligible. They have a common religion, the crude forms of which however, as practised in the Sudan, would be more respected by us than by the Egyptian. Lastly, the reconquest of the country was only made possible by British participation and its present prosperity, open for all to see, is entirely the work of British Administrators.



If the present anomalous condominium, which exists in name only, is to come to an end, His Majesty's Government will probably have to dis-interest Egypt, but this small investment should pay high returns in the fruitful development of this latest addition to our African Empire and in the well-being of the native races, who have prospered exceedingly under our care.

*A Foretaste of the Future.*

Prior to his visit to London Saad Pasha Zaglul stated in every official pronouncement that he would only negotiate on the understanding that the Sudan was to be handed over integrally to Egypt. On one occasion even he uttered a veiled threat in declaring that if negotiations were unsuccessful, Egypt would act as all peoples deprived of their rights. The violence of the language employed in the Sudan debates in the Egyptian Chamber is regrettable as indicative of the strong Anglophobia which still appears to be the leitmotif of Egyptian national politics.

The real bone of contention between Great Britain and Egypt is the control of the Nile, and Egyptians fear that the irrigation projects now in course of realization in the Sudan may deprive Egypt of its life blood. They have been sustained by irresponsible statements from certain misguided authorities on the subject, but, since it has been definitely established that these statements were unfounded, professional jealousy of the distinguished services of Sir Murdoch

Macdonald would appear to be at the root of them. It can hardly be pretended that the substitution of Egyptian for British engineers throughout the irrigation service of Egypt has resulted, or will result, in any amelioration of the water supply.

One has only to question the big landowner in Egypt to-day to understand how far the irrigation service has already deteriorated. One such averred to me that in the thirty years he had owned land under the old régime he had never had any difficulty with his water supply. Within a month of the substitution of the British engineer in charge of his "circle" by an Egyptian he found—at the beginning of the cotton season too—that he could get no water. Repeated applications were ineffective. Finally he sent a servant with a new "galabieh" and a pair of boots to bribe the night watchman in charge of the water gate. The next morning his land was flooded, but he found out later that it was not his inducements which had worked the oracle—though they also went—but rather a little private subscription organized by two villages on the same canal, by which the native engineer benefited to the tune of £120. As he explained, it requires a stout moral fibre for a man earning a few hundreds a year to resist the opportunity of making £20,000 in two years without marked disapproval on the part of the public. Whatever recriminations Egyptians indulge in against officials of the old régime, it should make us proud to note that our integrity has never been seriously questioned.

*Dry Rot.*

It is folly to pretend that the all-important question of water supply, both as regards Egypt and the Sudan, would be as well handled by native engineers as by British, and the same applies to all the public services. Dry rot has manifestly set in already in Egypt and has so far escaped public comment, owing perhaps to a general desire for fair play and a wish to give the Egyptians a run for their money. To the casual observer it is most marked in the railways and in the condition of the towns. Until two years ago the Egyptian State railways might have served as a model to the world. Every train ran to time, there was never any overcrowding. Two years of Egyptian maladministration have resulted in a sad lapse from the high standard set by British engineers.

One can hardly attribute the two recent resignations of British General Managers to pique only, as is so often explained by Egyptians. Both these resignations were sent in on the grounds that unless measures, chiefly those of supervision by European workmen in the shops, were taken, the management refused to take responsibility for accidents. Locomotive breakdowns are frequent, and the permanent way has got into such a dangerous condition that the management insisted on reducing the speed of the trains. Broken windows and burnt out lights are a common feature, and the tourist can safely reckon on three or four hours delay on the journey to Luxor for instance.

Alexandria is a peculiarly self-contained com-

munity, existing principally on the export of cotton, and the leading merchants, mostly non-indigenous and all non-Moslem, are well represented on the Municipality. The ultima ratio in the counsels of the borough was Alexander Granville Pasha, whose long tenure and distinguished services as Head of the International Quarantine Board won him a host of admirers and friends throughout the country. It is therefore not to be wondered at that the town is well kept and approaches European standards in this respect. This however does not apply to Cairo, where all the services are in the control of the Government, and particularly under that of the Tanzim Department.

*Decay of Cairo.*

For forty years there has been a succession of Englishmen in charge, and these officials will bear out that at no time since the beginning of the Occupation have the streets of Cairo been in such a deplorable condition as to-day. Until the abolition of the Protectorate, the streets were remarkably clean and well kept, and the European quarter, at least, compared favourably with anything Europe had to show.

There has always been a clearly defined line of demarcation between the native and the European quarters, the "beledi" and the "franghi." From time immemorial the craftsman has plied his trade in the narrow streets of the Mouski; but in the European quarter he has, by tacit convention and no doubt a little persuasion from the Tanzim, confined

his activities to the workshop or the factory. The restraining influence has disappeared, and the native workman is now emerging and plying his trade on the public footpath of the exceptionally fine Cairo streets. The shavings and litter of a carpenter's shop disfigure the pavement of the Sharia Magrabi within a few yards of the Turf Club, and round about Ramadan the native watchman, or boab, as likely as not keeps a sheep in the hallway of a fine modern block of flats. In a word, the "beledi" is encroaching on the "franghi" everywhere, and soon the Ismailia and Kasr el Doubara quarter will have become one with the Mouski and Saida Zeinab.

Something of the same kind is taking place in all the public services, and the monument to British rule, which has been so painstakingly raised during these last forty years and which compelled the admiration of all beholders, already shows many signs of decay.

Fortunately for Egypt, owing to the small number of men with the necessary qualifications available, Zaglul Pasha has secured the co-operation of certain distinguished members of previous Ministries. Chief among them might be mentioned Ahmed Pasha Ziwer and Mazlum Pasha. Both these men are highly educated and capable administrators, and deservedly enjoy the unbounded confidence of European and native alike. Political enmity precludes Adly Pasha or any of his many distinguished friends from holding office for some time to come. It is, however, from that group that the Egyptian Ministers now represent-

ing Egypt abroad have been drawn, but only because "horse sense" indicated that there was no other source to draw from.

With the accumulated momentum of forty years of British rule behind it, the Egyptian Government machine can be expected to carry on for some time, but, if ever the restraining influence of these old and tried servants of the State is removed, it will not be long before it leaves the rails.

*Revival of Old Abuses.*

The withdrawal of British control has had not only the expected negative result—the absence of good features in the administration—but also a positive one in the reinstatement of all the old evils.

Negotiations with the Ministry of Public Works are fast becoming impossible. King Bakshish, whose sovereignty was recognized by the Ottomans for four centuries from the Danube to the Blue Nile, but who was dethroned by the British during these last forty years within the confines of Egypt, has now resumed his sway. Military censorship, which the *Times* defined as the "most savagely ruthless in any country under British control," has been replaced by still more repressive methods, which are exercised in a quite arbitrary and malicious fashion, without even the excuse of military expediency. Thus the "Siassa," the organ of the Constitutional or Adly party, is suppressed without rhyme or reason for daring to imply the slightest criticism of the actions of the Zaglulists. A similar muzzling of public

opinion can only exist in Soviet Russia, but surely nowhere else in the world to-day.

Officials who are known to have any dealings or sympathies with the Adlyists are peremptorily dismissed. Tyranny and nepotism are the dominating features of the new régime and the spirit of vengeance is abroad in the land. In a word, in spite of the sincerity and good faith of Zaglul Pasha, which nobody questions, and of the restraining influence of his three or four high-minded lieutenants, the rank and file of the Nationalist Government is already showing all the familiar characteristics of Oriental abuse of authority.

*British Rule in the Sudan.*

In any case, until Egypt has proved herself capable of managing her own affairs, the intricate problems of Colonial administration, as presented in the vast spaces and diversity of populations in the Sudan, cannot be left to the fledglings of El Azhar and the Saidieh School without our incurring grave moral responsibilities. The effect of the autocratic, though most benevolent, despotism of our Sudan Administration has been to produce order out of the Mahdi's chaos, to treble the population in twenty years, to cover vast districts of sandy waste with growing and valuable crops, and, where no man's life or property were safe so short a time ago, to show a state of public security which many countries in both hemispheres might be thankful for to-day.

The Sudanese is a pure-bred African, and there is little racial tie between him and the congeries of

nationalities of Semitic, Aryan and African blood which constitute the Egyptian nation. The religious tie is, of course, there, but that is the only one. Nearly all the young men of Nubia, ranging from Khartoum to Meroe and Wadi Halfa, spend some part of their lives in domestic service in Egypt, and yet it is considered a grave *mésalliance* for them to marry an Egyptian woman. These Berberines are from many points of view an admirable race, with great qualities, and they share with their hardier brethren from the equatorial regions a by no means flattering opinion of the Egyptian.

They, too, in common with all other native races, will be agitating for self-determination one day, and they will certainly obtain a much larger measure of enlightened autonomy under the British than they ever will from the Egyptian. No one can possibly doubt that they have much more respect for us than they have for the Egyptian, and that is perhaps because we respect them, their religion and their customs. We limit our activities to the policing of the land and its development and to the education of the inhabitants, leaving controversial matters, religion, tribal tradition and customs, free from all interference.

The Sudan, verging on Uganda, is an all-important link in our African chain of Empire, into which England will yet regret that Egypt was not welded. Our great interests there must not be lightly given up, nor can we shift our responsibilities on to shoulders much too frail to bear the burden.



## XII

### THE NEW ROLE OF ENGLAND IN EGYPT

IN the short space of forty years, England has played many parts in the valley of the Nile. Her first appearance was in the character of a policeman, who was called in to put a term to disorders which endangered the lives and properties of foreigners and non-Moslem minorities. She became a trustee of European interests and the world at large admits that this trust has been wisely and impartially administered. The greatest Colonial administrator of modern times, Lord Cromer, drafted and carried into effect a programme of reform, which wrought an incredible change for the better in the material prosperity of the land, and England's work during this period was not only that of a far-sighted visionary, but also that of a constructive builder. She was, too, the banker, who supplied the funds needed for the realization of the vast public works, which doubled the wealth of the country every few years. As champion of her protégé, she planned and carried out the reconquest of the Sudan, and very generously shared the fruits of her victory. In the same rôle, she kept inviolate the soil of Egypt, when it was in danger of being overrun once more by the Turks—no

small service, this, when one remembers the essential truth of the saying that where the Turk plants his foot the grass never grows again. She showed astonishing forbearance, when the spoilt child displayed his ingratitude and later paraded his open animosity. Her attitude throughout was that of the much worried mother in Grimm's fairy tale: "Man muss die Kinder austaubern lassen"—they will tire of it, if left alone. When correction was inevitable, it was applied in the smallest and mildest doses. But in this case persistent clamour won the day.

England is now striving to assert herself in the rôle of guide, philosopher and friend. But impatient of all tutelage, Nationalists have set before their eyes the goal of complete elimination of all foreign influence. This agitation is, in my opinion, artificial, in so far as it exists and owes its continued existence to one remarkable man. It is not the Nationalists, although there are some fourteen million of them, who have won independence for Egypt, but the dogged obstinacy against odds and the unswerving purpose of Saad Pasha Zaglul. He must be considered as one of the most noteworthy figures of modern times. With us the science of the politician is in knowing when to give and when to take, but Saad Pasha has never yielded an inch on any ground and will never do so. While he is alive to keep aloft the banner of "Masr lil Masryin," there will be no compromise, and the presence of British troops in Egypt and the bare handful of officials, who are absolutely essential to guarantee proper regard for European interests, and

the question of the Sudan may at any time touch off an anti-European and particularly anti-British explosion. There can be no doubt that the whole articulate portion of the country ardently desired independence ; few men have therefore better deserved of their countrymen than Saad Pasha, to whom, and to no one else, they owe it. But it is sheer waste of time to negotiate with him on any of the original points, which he laid down in first formulating the claims of the country. Such safeguards and such established rights, as England must preserve, will always be disputed. Any further concession will, as always, be hailed as a fresh victory over a hated and recumbent foe, and conversely, firmness and determination on vital questions such as the Suez Canal and the Sudan will command their respect and enhance our waning prestige.

But Saad Pasha is not only our most determined enemy, but also one of the most enlightened men in Egypt. As an opponent, he is entitled to all the respect accorded to a valiant adversary in more chivalrous times ; but while we are unstinting in our praise of him in this capacity, it is permissible to ask how he is applying his other great qualities, which called forth the commendation of Lord Cromer, to the service of his country. He must know that the elimination of foreign experts from the more technical branches of the administration can but result in temporary chaos. Perhaps even he is not strong enough to resist the pressure of his followers.

It is satisfactory to be able to record that Abd el

Hamid Suleiman, the recently appointed Egyptian Minister responsible for the Railways, has taken an unexpectedly large view of his duties and has loyally supported the British officials of the administration. Part of the recent deterioration of the railway services is ascribed to the insufficiency of the funds earmarked for the use of the Ministry, but it is already recognized that the departure of every European expert and foreman impairs the efficiency of the system. In the first fervour for the Egyptianization of all services, many such were allowed or even asked to go and it is a healthy sign indeed that the present official responsible for the State Railways not only insists on the retention of the necessary European staff, but his support has reinstated discipline among the workers under their orders.

Nowadays almost every branch of the administration has its technical side, but particularly the Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, Telephones (all of which come under the Ministry of Communications), Irrigation and Public Health depend on the application of modern scientific methods. In the state of development that Egypt has reached, these services must be maintained in the condition in which they have been handed over or a serious breakdown may occur. For their maintenance foreign experts are essential, but it remains to be seen whether the chauvinism of the extremists or the more balanced counsels of those best fitted to guide the nation, many of whom figure in the present Ministry, will prevail.

Such is however not the case in certain Depart-

ments, particularly in those of the Interior and Justice, in which Egyptians are quite capable and well qualified to manage their own affairs.

Lord Cromer once gave warning of the danger of multiplying British officials unnecessarily in the Departments of the Egyptian Government. His tenure of office was one long succession of brilliant achievement, during which he brought the country from the verge of ruin to an unprecedented prosperity. He abolished the *corvée* and released the fellah from an age-old oppression; the Courts dispensed impartial justice for all and public security was re-established. Irrigation and agriculture made immense strides and Pasha and fellah alike admitted the benefits of British rule. Our prestige stood at its apogee and British officials were not only respected, but even liked by the inhabitants of the country, as is to-day the case in the Sudan.

Where and how did the change start? Many think that his signal and easy success in other fields ran away with the better judgment of Lord Cromer and his lieutenants, who became actuated by such a passion for reform, that they undertook the Westernization of purely internal affairs. The Egyptian for obscure reasons, which I have endeavoured to explain elsewhere, does not shine in the application of technical sciences, among which may be counted business management, which Americans have recently exalted to the rank of a science. In those branches then of the administration where business acumen and technical knowledge and its application are essential,

it was right and proper that foreigners and particularly Englishmen should supply the deficiency and no strenuous objection was made to their presence. But it was wrong to interfere with the affairs of the Interior to the extent that has been done.

From the Mudirs downwards, Egyptian officials of the Interior are on the whole capable, efficient and trustworthy, though some will object that they are prone to the abuses of the Orient. But as this is an Oriental land, the Easterner probably knows how to govern in internal matters as well as we do, and he certainly knows better how he wishes to be governed. There seems to be no reason why we should insist on bringing them up to the level of our standards in this respect, particularly as from many points of view they would consider the process rather a levelling down than a levelling up, as every change took them further from the habits of centuries in which they find their ease.

The Egyptian, too, is a proficient lawyer and there are a number of distinguished judges among them. In the judiciary, it was most impolitic to interfere, when once the interests of foreigners were properly safeguarded by the establishment of the Mixed Courts. Those who have personally known a number of Egyptian judges and seen them at work cannot but be struck by the high standard, which leaves little to be desired even when appraised by comparison with the most advanced nations of the West.

In these two fields it is rightly contended by many that Egyptians are better qualified to judge of their

own requirements and to fulfil them than Englishmen.

One can well understand the resentment felt by Egyptians, who had perhaps enjoyed a university training at home, when they entered the Ministry of the Interior at £9 a month, whereas British officials, who were incapable of rendering much service for some time owing to lack of knowledge of Arabic, started with £400 a year. In posts such as these, where no technical knowledge was required, and where the Englishmen appointed could lay no claim to any specific qualification that the Egyptian candidate did not possess, only the assumption of a moral superiority could justify the preference given to the former. Such an attitude was pharisaical and impolitic in the extreme and the record of the Ministry of the Interior and its numerous dependencies during the last few troublous years has proved how unwise it was to meddle unnecessarily with the internal affairs of the country.

The tendency to appoint Englishmen indiscriminately became very much more marked after the War and the numbers increased by leaps and bounds by the process known as "snowballing." Every British official after a cursory survey of his domain discovered subordinate positions, in which he imagined an Englishman could do the work better than an Egyptian. Demobilized N.C.O.s were engaged galore as clerks, motor drivers and in a host of minor capacities, and this in spite of the principles laid down by Cromer and his successors, enjoining the

strictest caution against the employment of an excessive number of Englishmen. It is a notable fact that British prestige stood at its highest and the tangible benefits of British rule in Egypt were most marked during the first twenty years of Lord Cromer's administration, when the number of Englishmen employed was probably under five hundred.

Since the War in this respect, British Authorities advanced some distance along the road towards the ideal, which one official is said to have set himself. His plan for the better governance of the country, which he propounded for the benefit of one of the Pashawat, was to order 14,000,000 donkey saddles from England. The quality and qualifications of a considerable number of the later arrivals would appear to have fitted them rather to bear such saddles than to ride them. The snowball effect was noticeable not only in the increasing number of appointments, but also in the resentment caused by them. If ever there was a mistaken policy, it was this, and a very real and well-founded grievance was thus inflicted on the Egyptians.

The Nationalists at first proposed to make a clean sweep of all departments, but better counsels have now prevailed and there is every probability that the deficiency of technical knowledge and engineering skill will be met as heretofore by appointing Europeans, though with a different status, as they will be under contract only and subordinate to Egyptian authority.

The few remaining British officials will find their



executive powers considerably curtailed, though the High Commissioner, the Adviser to the Ministry of Finance, the Judicial Adviser and the Director of European security will doubtless be able to exercise the power of veto, when foreign interests are in jeopardy. But constructive administration will be no longer in their domain. It will depend, however, very largely on the handful of high officials, on whose retention England had to insist, whether we now regain that prestige and goodwill among Egyptians, of which there remains at present hardly a trace.

British officers serving in the Egyptian Army, elsewhere than in the Sudan, will retire in due course. It is illogical that the title of Sirdar of the Army of independent Egypt should be held by the British Governor-General of the Sudan and it is surprising to see that the anomaly still exists. British officers serving in the Sudan should also be released without delay from their oath of allegiance to the King of Egypt. As a corollary to these measures, it might be added that there are not insuperable objections to the continuation of the Condominium in the Sudan, as long as Egypt's position is only recognized *de jure*, but a *de facto* recognition would imply co-operation, and with an unwilling and hostile partner this is quite out of the question. The sooner facts are faced and the Egyptian battalions of the Sudan disbanded and sent home, and all the Egyptian mamurs and other officials relieved of their functions, the better for all concerned.\* Every Egyptian in Government service in the Sudan is at present convinced

\* This has now been done.

that his duty demands loyalty to Egypt and, by inference, disloyalty to the Sudan Government, and is therefore a potential source of incalculable mischief. This situation is too paradoxical, even for North-East Africa.

The immense possibilities before the Sudan are little recognized at home. The million square miles or more of its territory will one day support a population many times that of Egypt and it is sincerely to be hoped that the Government will develop on the lines laid down by Sir Reginald Wingate and his staff, which have produced such splendid results. A rapid and impatient Westernization will be attended, as always, by disaster, and here again the difficulty will be to preserve a just balance between local aspirations and the driving needs of Western economic industrialism. The only country in the world, which seems to have solved the problem with due regard to indigenous institutions, is Japan, but as it has been proved feasible, there is no reason why success should not be attained elsewhere.

This question of water supply and the guaranteeing of it to Egypt is the most thorny of all. Perhaps some such idea was at the back of Sir Murdoch MacDonald's mind when he mentioned on the 10th July of this year in the House of Commons that Egypt might in future be glad to remain attached to the British Empire. Short of an extraneous international commission, there would seem to be no other solution, and even this would not present the necessary guarantees for the execution of any agree-

ment. Egypt will have to take careful stock of her position in this respect. The acuteness of the problem is vaguely felt but not yet distinctly apparent, as it must become in a decade or so.

In internal matters Egypt has attained her heart's desire, but if she wishes to follow in the footsteps of Japan and prove herself the equal of Europe, she will have to discard boldly her ancient shibboleths and inhibitions. This is not said carpingly or disparagingly, because many feel that England will have to do as much, if she wishes to keep pace with America, who is so fast outstripping her. Antiquated weights and measures, out of date economic theories, even our system of land tenure and a host of other deep rooted indigenous institutions will have to go by the board one day, and not such a very distant day either. The business taboo, which is so marked a characteristic of the Orient, survives in a mitigated form among certain circles at home, but has been definitely discarded in America, where a stigma attaches to the sons of the richest, if they do not engage in some commercial pursuit, failing an official one. The educated Oriental does not yet even consider the possibility of a business career and as a result only Government or the liberal professions are open to him.

The unconquerable spirit of "malesh" cannot be eradicated in a few years. "Malesh" is the Egyptian equivalent of the Spanish "mañana," but meaning "no matter" it is an accentuated form of the failing, for it does not even attempt to set a term to tergiversa-

tion. There are many who think that nothing will change the Oriental in this respect. Modern civilization and its ramifications depend rather on the spirit of "do it now" and it will take the East a long time to absorb it.

But of all the principles that Egypt will have to discard, first and foremost is hatred of England. Egyptians will have to adopt a more reasoned view of the inevitability of British supremacy, which is based on their own interests no less than on our own. This hatred is only real among, say, a hundred thousand of the articulate, but is not shared by the inarticulate masses, for whom they claim to speak. On the contrary it is recognized that we have faithfully discharged the moral duty we owed to the millions of natives, whose trust in English justice had been slowly built up by the Cromer system of ruling. Indeed many pretend that these voiceless millions ought not to have been abandoned and that annexation would have meant security and material well-being for the worker, whereas the present régime leaves him exposed to oppression, as in the days of Ismail. A regular feature of the old régime was the daily receipt of a number of telegrams and petitions from the humble all over the country at the Residency, and every one of these was carefully inquired into ; to whom are such to apply to-day ?

The terrible outrage on the person of the late Sir Lee Stack is the outcome of the propagation of the doctrine of hatred, and every individual Egyptian, whatever his station, who seeks to foster it, must

bear a share of the moral responsibility. The Government of Egypt is for the moment in the hands of the most reliable and trustworthy elements of the country, headed by Zaglul Pasha himself, whose sincerity it is impossible to doubt; unfortunately it is equally impossible to doubt his hatred for all things British. It is nevertheless the first duty of the Government, in the interests of the nation, to curb the activities of the extremists, and to teach all and sundry that the fulfilment of their programme can only be attained by constitutional methods. It is too the duty of the Home Government to disabuse Egyptians of the deep-rooted idea that terrorism can lead to further concessions.

There are a number of gentlemen among the present Ministry, such as Ziver Pasha, Mazloun Pasha and a few others who, beyond all question, most sincerely deplore the methods of the extremists and the state of mind engendered by their activities throughout the country. It is for them to insist on the elimination of this undesirable element from the councils of the nation, as they realize only too well that their retention can but do harm to the cause of Egypt and may even jeopardize the measure of independence she has already attained.

It is for them again to put the relations of Egypt with Great Britain on a different footing, to insist on the abandonment of truculent antagonism and to discountenance the use on political platforms and in the Press of such expressions as "in the field of sacrifice there is much room" and "complete inde-



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pendence or quick odious death." These expressions have been freely used of late and have brought forth no rebuke from the Nationalist leaders, though they must have realized that the extreme elements would interpret them as direct exhortations to violence. The leaders of public opinion will perhaps now understand that such tactics may cause irreparable injury to the national cause and that their duty is to undo the work of the last few years and to dispel the artificial atmosphere of hatred, by openly recognizing the benefits conferred by British rule and by showing Egypt that her interests can best be forwarded by loyal co-operation and association with England.

Given goodwill on either side, and absence of those incidents which are calculated by the extremists to envenom the atmosphere, there is every hope that the principle of internal independence can be reconciled with the vital interest of England in the Suez Canal to the satisfaction of both parties. The constant friction which has been the outstanding feature of the relations between the two countries since the War can lead to no good and, if allowed to continue, may do incalculable harm, whereas one and the other can but benefit by an amicable settlement, based on the maximum concessions compatible with their respective interests.

No man from the West can really draw conclusions as to the logical results of any given line of action or state of affairs in the East. The result may always be at the extreme limit either of good or of evil; so we must not despair at the very disappointing effect of



the generous treatment of Egypt by England since the War, but rather hope that the Nationalists will come to see the error of their ways and realize that salvation lies not in one-sided provocation, but in mutual goodwill.

But the logic of the West differs widely from the logic of the East and this inconsistency should be held ever present in the reader's mind in making deductions from this summary of the author's view of the recent and present state of Egypt.

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